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in memory of her brother
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PUBLICATIONS
OF THE
NAVY RECORDS SOCIETY
VOL. XXVIII.

ADMIRAL JOHN MARKHAM

1950



ADMIRAL JOHN MARKHAM.

SELECTIONS
FROM
THE CORRESPONDENCE
OF
Admiral John Markham
DURING THE YEARS
1801-4 AND 1806-7

EDITED BY
SIR CLEMENTS MARKHAM, K.C.B.



PRINTED FOR THE NAVY RECORDS SOCIETY
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INTRODUCTION

THE letters which form the present volume were written by flag officers and captains on active service in the early part of the nineteenth century to Admiral John Markham, who was a lord of the admiralty during the administrations of Mr. Addington and Lord Grenville. Their interest consists in the expressions of private views on service matters written confidentially. An interval of a century justifies their publication, for the way in which they had been preserved and docketed shows that a future use of their contents was contemplated. Ever since the admiral's death his papers have been in a chest, now in the possession of his descendants at Morland in Westmoreland.

Lord St. Vincent accepted the office of first lord of the admiralty in Mr. Addington's administration, and there never was a time when a naval officer of energy and experience was more needed as first lord, owing to the gross jobbery and mal-

versation in the navy civil departments. Reforms could only be carried out by a perfectly fearless and resolute naval officer such as Lord St. Vincent, who was intimately acquainted with all the ins and outs of navy board and dockyard robbery.

Lord St. Vincent selected his two sea lords from among the officers who had served under him. Sir Thomas Troubridge, his first sea lord, was the intimate and trusted friend of Nelson, and was Lord St. Vincent's captain of the fleet during the blockade of Brest. John Markham, the second son of Dr. William Markham, Archbishop of York, was born in 1761 and entered the service in 1776, under the auspices of the Honourable George Keith Elphinstone, afterwards Lord Keith, who continued his friend through life. He was at the taking of Martinique under Sir John Jervis in 1794, and served under him, when Lord St. Vincent, in the Mediterranean and at the blockade of Brest. Troubridge and Markham were the two officers of Lord St. Vincent's choice, the civilians on the board being Sir Philip Stephens, Bart., who had been secretary for many years, the Honourable William Eliot,¹ Mr. James Adams, and Mr. Garthshore. Mr. Evan Nepean was secretary, and Mr. Tucker private secretary to the first lord. The new board first met on February 18th, 1801.

On November 12th, 1801, Captain John Markham was elected member for Portsmouth, and

¹ Afterwards Earl of St. Germans. He retired in January 1804, when Sir Harry Burrard Neale, Bart., was appointed as a 3rd naval lord, and Mr. John Lemon as another civil lord in place of Mr. Garthshore.

he became a rear-admiral on April 23rd, 1804. The first board on which he served lasted from February 18th, 1801, to May 15th, 1804, a period of three years and four months.

The first work of the new admiralty was the equipment and despatch of the Baltic expedition. Then came Lord Keith's successes on the coast of Egypt, and Lord Nelson's proceedings at Boulogne. But the Peace of Amiens was signed on the 26th of March, 1802.

The board was then able to give its undivided attention to the condition of the civil departments of the navy. After having received much evidence, Lord St. Vincent and Admiral Markham proceeded to make a thorough personal investigation at all the dockyards in August and September 1802. Their conclusion was that the evils to be cured were so gigantic in their proportions as to be beyond the unaided powers of the admiralty. A parliamentary commission would be necessary to enquire into the whole naval civil branch.

Admiral Markham had the important duty of introducing a bill with this object and managing its passage through the House of Commons. He had the help of distinguished naval officers, such as Sir Edward Pellew and Sir Charles Pole, and the support of Mr. Tierney and Mr. Sheridan. But he was opposed by the followers of Mr. Pitt and by the whole army of jobbers. The commissioners were nominated in the Act,¹ with Admiral Sir Charles

¹ Admiral Sir Charles Morice Pole, Bart.; Hugh Leycester, Esq., of Toft; Ewan Law, Esq.; John Ford, Esq.; Captain Nicholls, R.N.

Pole as chairman ; the bill was read a third time, and on December 20th, 1802, Admiral Markham, with several other members, brought it up to the House of Lords. It was there introduced and explained by Lord Pelham, and Lord Nelson gave it his cordial support. The work of the commission was commenced with great diligence in February 1803.

There were twelve reports and a supplementary one. 'This was justly pronounced to have been one of the most able, acute, and laborious investigations ever undertaken. It shook corruption to its very foundations, and traced the sources of speculation to their most secret recesses.' It reflected the highest credit on the commissioners, and also on the board of admiralty, which resolutely insisted on the investigations, and had supported the commissioners regardless of clamour, abuse, misrepresentation, and the host of rancorous enemies their lordships made for themselves. On the 2nd of May, 1805, the thanks of the House of Commons were voted to the commissioners.

The other great parliamentary work of Admiral Markham was the defence of his illustrious old chief.

The war broke out again on May 16th, 1803, and the board of admiralty was not found unprepared. Within forty-eight hours Admiral Cornwallis was blockading Brest with ten or twelve sail of the line ; Lord Nelson hoisted his flag on board the *Victory* and proceeded to the blockade of Toulon ; while Lord Keith took command in the Downs to watch Boulogne and the Dutch coast.

When Mr. Addington took office, Mr. Pitt

‘pledged himself to advise and support Mr. Addington’s ministry, and he considered this pledge as solemnly binding, not redeemable by any lapse of time, nor ever to be cancelled without the express consent of Mr. Addington.’¹ But on March 15th, 1804, Mr. Pitt moved for papers relating to the naval defences ; the object being to attack the administration of Lord St. Vincent by comparing the number of ships in commission in 1793 and 1803, and in other ways. The papers were refused because the motion implied a censure on the admiralty. Pitt’s attack was vehement, and Lord St. Vincent never forgave it. Mr. Tierney, Mr. Sheridan, Sir E. Pellew, Sir C. Pole replied, and Admiral Markham proved that both Mr. Pitt’s facts and figures were wrong, and that his inferences were misleading. The motion was defeated by a majority of seventy-one. Two months afterwards, on May 15th, 1804, the Addington ministry resigned, and Mr. Pitt formed his second administration.

The attacks on Lord St. Vincent continued, and a Mr. Jeffrey, a follower of Mr. Pitt, was put up to continue a very discreditable business. Admiral Markham undertook the defence. This Jeffrey was a tool of the navy board and the contractors. He had a bad case, and he was no match in debate for Lord Howick and Admiral Markham. Jeffrey persisted from May 1805 to May 1806, when the House of Commons unanimously passed a vote ‘that the conduct of the Earl of St. Vincent in his naval administration has added an additional lustre to his

¹ Mr. Canning to the Earl of Malmesbury, October 20th, 1802.

exalted character, and is entitled to the approbation of this House.'

Admiral Markham's two great parliamentary services were the conducting of the Act for creating a commission of naval enquiry through the House; and his successful defence of his glorious old chief.

On January 28th, 1806, the government of 'All the Talents' was formed, with Lord Grenville as prime minister, Mr. Fox as secretary of state for foreign affairs, and the Honourable Charles Grey, afterwards Lord Howick, as first lord of the admiralty. Mr. Grey selected Admiral Markham to be first sea lord, Admiral Sir Charles Pole and Captain Sir Harry Neale, Bart., as the other two sea lords; Lord William Russell, Lord Kensington, and Sir Philip Stephens as civil lords. Mr. Marsden and Mr. Tucker were secretaries. Earl St. Vincent, at the age of seventy-one, hoisted his flag on board the *Hibernia*, to command the fleet off Brest.

The death of Mr. Fox on September 13th, 1806, necessitated changes. Lord Howick succeeded as secretary of state for foreign affairs; and Mr. Thomas Grenville became first lord of the admiralty. He hesitated about retaining Admiral Markham. On October 4th he wrote, 'I am still quite at a loss for a sheet anchor, and wish Markham had not made so many enemies, for in zeal and quickness of resource he seems to me to have great merit.'¹ On the 11th he wrote to Lord Grenville, 'I have at length made up my mind to keep Mark-

¹ *Grenville Memoirs*, iv. p. 83.

ham, and have told him so, and we are now established in perfect confidence.' Sir Charles Pole was succeeded by Captain Thomas F. Fremantle, R.N. Sir Harry Neale remained, with Lord Kensington, Mr. Frankland, and Lord William Russell.

Lord St. Vincent wrote to Mr. T. Grenville, 'You will find in Markham firmness and integrity to the backbone, happily combined with ability, diligence, and zeal.'

Admiral Markham, when the River Plate expedition had been forced on the government by Sir Home Popham, made the necessary arrangements expeditiously and well. He supplied all the means for securing success. The failure was with the generals on the spot. An insight into the numerous difficulties and the proceedings generally will be found in the letters from Sir George Murray.

Lord Grenville's government went out on March 4th, 1807, and Lord St. Vincent at once resigned the command of the fleet off Brest. He wrote to Mr. T. Grenville: 'The support I have received from the board under your auspices has enabled me to restore the fleet to the vigour in which I left it seven years ago.'

Admiral Markham was first sea lord from January 1806 to March 1807, under Lord Howick and Mr. T. Grenville. Altogether he was a lord of the admiralty for four and a half years. He was member for Portsmouth, the last naval member, from 1801 to 1826, when he retired. He died at Naples on February 16th, 1827, in his sixty-eighth year.

We gather from the correspondence that Admiral

Markham's administration secured him the approval of his brother officers. Lords St. Vincent and Collingwood;¹ Duckworth, Saumarez,² Keith, Strachan,³ Russell,⁴ all write with expressions of confidence and appreciation; as do Sir George Murray and others. Captain T. Hamilton expresses himself in still stronger terms.⁵ When Admiral Markham finally left the admiralty, Sir George Grey wrote,⁶ 'I am outrageous to hear you are going, but it is a great satisfaction to hear from all quarters that you are regretted, and which from my heart I believe to be the case with the generality of the service.'

Mrs. Markham, to whom there are messages or remembrances in nearly every letter, was the Hon. Maria Rice, sister of Lord Dynevor, who was married to Captain John Markham on November 21st, 1796. She died at her brother's house, in Dover Street, in December 1810. The sons, who also have messages sent to them in many of the letters, were John, born at the admiralty in 1801, died unmarried in 1883; Rice, born at the admiralty in 1803, vicar of Morland in Westmoreland, died in 1877, leaving a daughter Maria; and Frederick, born at Ades in 1805, lieutenant-general, C.B., died unmarried, 1855. The admiral also had a daughter, Maria,⁷ who was born at Eastbourne in 1806, and died unmarried in 1836.

In May 1811 Admiral Markham sat for his picture to Sir William Beechey, for Lord St. Vincent. He is in uniform, and holds the bill for a

¹ P. 70.² P. 75.³ P. 412.⁴ Pp. 184, 187.⁵ P. 329.⁶ P. 396.⁷ P. 394.

commission of naval enquiry in his hand. The portrait is now at Morland.

If the admiral had lived three years longer he would have seen all the reforms, he had recommended, carried out ; and his services would have received due recognition from his colleague, the Lord Howick of 1806, who, as Earl Grey, in 1830 became prime minister.

Half the letters from Lord St. Vincent are dated from Rochetts, when he was too unwell to attend at the admiralty. Several of these relate to the commission of naval enquiry and its composition. In one¹ his lordship praises the way in which Admiral Markham prepared the motion for a commission by giving full credit to Lord Spencer's administration. The other half consists of interesting letters from Lord St. Vincent when in command of the fleet blockading Brest.²

The two letters from Lord Collingwood, and four from Sir James Saumarez are interesting, especially Lord Collingwood's objections to his affairs being taken up in the House by Mr. Spencer Stanhope without his knowledge. The eighteen letters from Sir John Duckworth, from the West Indies and Mediterranean, are very characteristic.

Lord Keith was commander-in-chief on our eastern coasts at the time that Napoleon meditated a descent from Boulogne. He was surrounded by difficulties of all kinds : ambitious subordinates wanting to work independently, like Sir Sidney

¹ P. 13.

² Some of these letters have already been published by Brenton, but not from the originals.

Smith and Captain Wright ; intelligence hard to obtain, examinations of spies and doubtful characters ; the management and distribution of the fleet, and of numerous hired small craft, and a thousand other details. Lord Keith's letters give us an insight into all these matters. The letters from Admirals Rowley and Russell relate to the same kind of service. Those from Admiral Vashon are on the subject of raising men in Scotland.

Admiral George Murray's correspondence, with the letters from Admiral Stirling and Captain Corbet, furnish much detailed information, from the naval point of view, respecting the unfortunate expedition to the River Plate in 1807.

The letters from Captain Thomas Hamilton are of two kinds. The first contains information respecting Holland collected in a visit during the short lull after the Peace of Amiens, a letter from Paris, and a key to a cypher. The second part of Captain Hamilton's correspondence is devoted to questions of construction.

The letters from Sir Samuel Hood and Sir Alexander Cochrane will be found to be of interest. Those from Sir Thomas Troubridge and the last from Sir Edward Pellew were written just before the catastrophe, which lost to the service 'the ablest adviser and best executive officer in the navy, with honour and courage bright as his sword,' as Lord St. Vincent described him.

The letters from Admiral Montagu and Sir George Grey chiefly relate to Portsmouth and the work in the dockyard.

A scurrilous pamphlet, signed 'Aristides,' is the

subject of letters from Captain T. Byam Martin and Commissioner Fanshawe. The friendly interchange of letters between Captain the Hon. Robert Stopford and Admiral Markham has reference to a court-martial that the board, to which Admiral Markham belonged, deemed it their duty to order on Captain Stopford for disobedience of orders.

The letters from Sir Richard Strachan are not without interest, and those from Sir Isaac Coffin are exceedingly amusing. Among the few single letters at the end of the volume, there is one from the well-known Captain Philip Beaver, suggesting leather shields to be fixed on the boarding pikes of the Sea-Fencibles. The concluding letters are from Captain Croft, of the Crofts of Stillington. This young officer was a midshipman in the Centaur, under Captain Markham, who ever afterwards watched over his advancement in the service.

My thanks are due to my cousin, Miss Mabel Markham, great-granddaughter of the admiral, who arranged, calendared, and transcribed the letters with admirable judgment and care. Without her aid the volume could not have been produced. I have also to thank our secretary, Mr. Laughton, for many valuable suggestions and for much assistance, and Mr. Cyril Longhurst for his help in making the Index.



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ILLUSTRATION

Admiral John Markham, from a pencil drawing after the painting
by Sir William Beechey *Frontispiece*



THE CORRESPONDENCE
OF
ADMIRAL JOHN MARKHAM
1801-1807

FROM LORD ST. VINCENT

Tor Abbey, Sunday evening, 11th January, 1801.

My dear Sir,—In my public letter of this day to the admiralty, I have named Captains Cuming and Bowen as fit men to command ships of the line, by order, both resident within an easy distance from Tor Bay. Captain Vashon has asked leave of absence for the recovery of his health, as I hope you will do, by to-morrow's post. I don't know a man more likely to fulfil all your wishes in the *Centaur* than Bowen; I name him to you as a very fit person to command the *Centaur* in your most necessary absence. Don't answer this note to-night, but allow me to call upon you to-morrow morning. With our best wishes to Mrs. Markham, believe me to be,

Yours most truly,
ST. VINCENT.¹

¹ This letter was written when Lord St. Vincent was still in command of the Brest fleet, and Captain Markham still in the *Centaur*.

2 *LETTERS TO ADMIRAL MARKHAM*

Rochetts, 27th December, 1801.

My dear Sir,—Let Lord Keith's conduct touching refreshments for the sick of the squadron before Alexandria have been ever so inattentive, the captains in question proceeded improperly, and the board could do no less than express a disapprobation of it; nor do I think the letters in the box require any other answer than a mere acknowledgment in the usual manner, for one of them will continue the discussion *ad infinitum* if we do not put a stop to it.

Mr. Marsden has sent me Dr. Blane's protest, which is very reprehensible, for I have no doubt it is circulated through all the naval hospitals, and must do a great deal of mischief. It is notorious that the practice he recommends has been the occasion of the loss of many lives, by the absence of every medical and surgical assistant and the plunder of the dispensaries, where private practice has obtained. Scandalous in the highest degree, the doctor's principles if acted upon to this extent will open such scenes of abuse and corruption as never yet appeared in any of our establishments. Upon reading this paper over again, his attack is made upon his own board, with an oblique reflection upon ours.

In endeavouring to get the better of one of my complaints I have reduced myself rather too low, but Dr. Pitcairn has put me in a way to come right again.

Rochetts, 15th April, 1802.

My dear Sir,—Captain Capel will look to a higher rate than the *Aurora*; she will do for Captain Wolfe, Lord Spencer's friend, who I wish very much to employ. I don't know the character of Captain Bass, but the Woolwich will require a handy, bustling seaman, and should he be of that description you

cannot do better than place him in her. Captain Fane has been very strenuously recommended for employment; he being an honourable, his fitness for a storeship is doubtful, therefore you had best put him in one of the vacant sloops.

Your old shipmate, Captain Richbell, is a fair candidate for employment, and perhaps would like to be in one of the storeships; of this you are a better judge than your very sincere and obedient servant,

ST. VINCENT.

I see Mr. Sheridan has touched upon the lieutenants' half pay. I expect to see George Parker here to-morrow, who will be of great use in arranging my long list, for my head has not been in a state to digest it.

There is a Captain Lavie, low on the post list, I wish to employ in a small ship.

Rochetts, 16th April, 1802.

My dear Sir,—I heartily hope the place you have heard of in Sussex will suit, and that you will have a pleasant trip. If the Naiad is ready to be commissioned, Captain Williams should be appointed, unless Sir Philip should prefer the Hussar or Dryad, both better ships I believe. If Lieutenant Thompson is promoted, your friends at Portsmouth must be content, and not expect any more patronage of that size, with the exception of Mr. J. Carter, who has recommended a relation for post. Captains Bradley and Garrett are upon the spot, and will be glad of the trips to Newfoundland and Halifax; those two large frigates will probably be paid off on their return, both of them having been well worked must require repair. You will see by

4 *LETTERS TO ADMIRAL MARKHAM*

the enclosed that Captain Drummond wants to come ashore, and the sooner you supersede him the better. Young Mundy asked for the Carysfort, but I gave him no answer. You say Nepean is gone down to the committee supported by Doctors Lynn and Trotter ; am I to infer that N. has altered his opinion of the nitrous acid, what I conceived he was an advocate for? I am totally ignorant of both these inventions, but I do not like to see them carried so much in the way of a job. It is inconceivable what can have become of the Namur, but after the loss of the Assistance one ought not to be surprised at anything. The Duke of Kent interests himself about the purser of the last mentioned ship, whose name is Bignel, and he solicits the promotion of David St. Clair, who passed his examination last Wednesday sevensnight, which I will thank you to comply with.

Our best wishes attend Mrs. M., you, and the little boy, and I am most truly yours, &c.

I have run over the courts-martial on the San Esperanza's officers, and am of opinion she should be paid off and all the parties got rid of.

Rochetts, 5th November, 1802.

My dear Sir,—It will be monstrous in the navy board to introduce a new clerk while there is one fit to be placed on the establishment among the extra clerks ; we took measures to this effect while on our tour, as far as related to the dockyards, and I see no impropriety in making it a standing regulation at all the boards under our control ; it should be extended to them all, under the same date. Sir Thomas's paper, which I return, quite shocks me, and I much fear the worthy gentlemen have the benefit in meal or in malt at this moment ;

the sooner such an abominable practice can be cut up by the roots the better.

Lady St. Vincent, who desires to be kindly remembered to you and yours, rejoices with me in the good accounts you give of the archbishop, to whom I beg you will make my best respects, and wishing you a happy meeting with Mrs. Markham to-morrow, believe me to be very sincerely yours, &c.

Why is not the Centaur in Cawsand Bay ?

[*Private.*]

Admiralty, Rochetts, December 1, 1802.

My dear Sir,—When I wrote you yesterday I was not aware that Mr. Addington and you might have had communication upon the subject of Mr. Law,¹ who I hope will not decline the task ; of this you probably are at a certainty, one way or the other. I have great doubts of the wisdom of reducing our naval force in the West Indies until some explanation between our court and that of France is come to, for our intelligence of the destination of the squadrons which frequently sail from the ports of the latter is so vague, we know not where to detach after them, and upon the most trifling alarm the admiralty is called upon to answer for the safety of every colony, so that it is absolutely necessary, at the present period, to have the king's commands signified to us through Lord Hobart before any diminution is made, especially as we are not well informed of the naval force France actually has in St. Domingo. This must be between Troubridge, you, and me.

As you are to proceed upon the bill to authorise the commission to enquire into abuses, it may not be

¹ Mr. Law had been asked to become a member of the commission to investigate abuses and frauds in the naval departments.

6 *LETTERS TO ADMIRAL MARKHAM*

amiss to enter upon the regulation of the Chest at Chatham at the same time, and I will thank you to moot the subject with Mr. Bragge, who as treasurer of the navy will have to carry that wholesome and necessary measure into execution, and from his habits of business in the House of Commons will be very useful in carrying it through. I do not recollect whether I have had any conversation with Mr. Addington about the frauds and abuses in the conduct of the Chest, but he is so solicitous for the redress of such evils, I am sure he will join heartily in it. The powers of the commissioners must be very extensive, so as to reach the victualling, sick and wounded, and every other branch of the civil department of the navy, to examine contractors, their clerks, agents, &c., and upon oath. Tucker I fancy is well prepared to give information of all that is necessary. I shall not be surprised if some one rises to oppose the enquiry, and demands to know on what grounds it is instituted ; in this event I hope Sir T. Troubridge will be guarded should a sudden impulse make him start up to reply, and that he will not show too much warmth.

I remember Mr. Ottley's case, and thought it invited attention, therefore do him right. Admiral Cornwallis seems by his letter to expect something will be done for Mr. Read, who has saved the lives of two citizens at the risk of his own ; whatever the board advises I shall approve. The prayer of Lieutenant Summers's petition deserves consideration ; if he was actually wounded in the manner described by the blast on board the Theseus, he seems entitled to a pension. Mr. Henslow cannot be committed to prison unless the informers swear to the charges they have stated in their letter to Mr. Bicknell, and I think it a necessary precaution that they should be well examined by him before they

go before a magistrate, as a failure of evidence would bring on us a charge of intemperance, bordering upon persecution. Mr. Jervis will be ready and willing to give us sense on this, and every other subject of the kind, without a view to fees.

All here join in every kind wish to you and co. ; with your very sincere, &c.

Rochetts, 2nd December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—I tremble at the doubts Mr. Law expressed to you and Sir Thomas, as I really do not know where to look for another so well qualified in all respects for the undertaking. Lord Ellenborough is likely to consult Commissioner Towry¹ on the subject, who, I think, will not advise against it. Captain Hill, of the *Camilla*, is a candidate for a larger frigate, founded upon his seeing several junior captains in the command of them I conclude. When the trumpet of war ceases to sound you will probably have applications from some of these to come ashore (as I observe they are marrying at a great rate), and may be able to make an arrangement in favour of Hill. Captain Honyman is to have the first frigate we have occasion to commission, and I have a notion Sir Thomas, in your absence, had intended he should succeed to one at Portsmouth, and sent *la Topaze* there for the purpose of fitting her out. We rejoice in the good accounts you give of Mrs. Markham and the little boy, and with our best wishes for the health and happiness of you all, believe me to be, &c.

Rochetts, 3rd December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—I despatch the messenger without being able to run over the debates. I observe, however, that you very properly stated that Marshall

¹ His father-in-law.

8 LETTERS TO ADMIRAL MARKHAM

was dismissed, on a report, from a committee of the navy board, of a gross neglect of an important part of his duty. I am glad the attack was made, because it will prevent any resistance to the motion for a commission.

I enclose a letter to Mr. Law, which, if you approve, I will thank you to send. I wish you had conveyed Sir Thomas Troubridge's and your own opinion whether any measure should be taken about Captain Ferrier. I have signified to Nepean that the clerk's letters should be sent to him.

I differ totally with Tucker about the sea officer, and the one he is anxious about would not do, for obvious reasons.

Rochetts, 4th December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—You cannot entertain a doubt of my receiving everything which is offered by Sir Thomas or you in the way it is meant, and I thank you very much for the suggestion of a fourth commissioner, and no man can be less objectionable than Vice-Admiral Pole, if he will undertake it: I should never have thought of Tucker had he not possessed a degree of knowledge upon the subject, without which no progress could have been made. I will write to Mr. Addington in the morning, and send the letter by Tucker. I very much approve your proposition in favour of the Vols. pr. order who have served three years, and with our best wishes to you all, believe me to be yours most truly, &c.

I am glad we are *d'accord* on the subject of Captain Ferrier.

Something should be done for the masters and surgeons.

Rochetts, 5th December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—The proposition for imposing a stamp upon the publication of the army and navy

lists would come better from Mr. Vansittart, as a matter of revenue, than from the secretary of war ; a much smaller duty than ten shillings will knock them both up. I feel as you do, that those publications having (very improperly in my judgment) been permitted during such a war as the last, the putting them down in the manner proposed by Mr. Yorke would furnish the Grenvilles and Co. with a sarcastic argument against the measure.

I have received a very obliging letter from Mr. Law.

Rochetts, 7th December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—I rejoice in the completion of the board of commissioners, lamenting that I am not likely to contribute much to the good work. I rather imagine that all the commissioners of the navy are on the list of half pay, like the officers in Greenwich Hospital, and that the amount, with the exception of the half pay of the comptroller, is applied to the benefit of the public ; in any event it would be an unseemly thing for us to undo what was done by the late administration. I am therefore of opinion we had better not meddle with it.

My cough is gone, and I sleep much better than I did. I am nevertheless afraid to return to the admiralty until entirely free from other symptoms, which show that there is still a disposition to the grand disorder.

Lady St. Vincent joins in every good wish to your house and the opposite with, my dear sir, &c.

Rochetts, 9th December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—That the messenger may return in time, I shall confine myself entirely to the grand object. There can be no objection to your moving for the minutes of our proceedings on the visitation ;

on the contrary, they appear to me a necessary preparative for what is to follow. I write to Sir Evan Nepean by the messenger, desiring he will immediately give directions to the solicitor of the admiralty to prepare a bill, as you propose.

I am much better.

Rochetts, December 10, 1802.

My dear Sir,—Your plan for the yachts, and scheme for the masters, mates, midshipmen and volunteers of the first class are very advisable, but you must add to the complements of the ships in proportion to the number of extra midshipmen and volunteers, or they will not have a sufficient number of men to navigate them properly. I am of opinion that the surgeons and masters should have other encouragement, besides that of a better superannuation. I mean that a much greater number of them should be entitled to half pay, not from their standing on the list, but from the number of years they have been employed in active service; and that after the death of those in receipt of the highest half pay, none should be entitled to it who had not served so many years, and so on in succession to the lowest class; five years for a master and nine years for a surgeon appear to me periods of service much too short to entitle them to four and five shillings a day, for it certainly tends to evasion of service rather than a perseverance in it. Supposing the masters were required to serve eight years and the surgeons twelve, and to descend in proportion, and the numbers in each class increased in the manner those of the captains and lieutenants were, the expense to the public would not be very great, while the stimulus to the active service of the masters and surgeons would be highly beneficial. You are so much more master of this subject than I am, that

these remarks are only furnished to give an outline, which the consideration you have given to the subject will readily reduce to some system.

I conclude that Mr. Fox moved an amendment to the motion of last night, with a view to reduce the number of troops proposed for the ensuing year, which no doubt gave room for ample scope of debate. I can readily imagine that Sheridan exercised much sarcastic wit at the conduct of all sides.

Rochetts, 12th December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—I have made several additions to the draft of the bill, but whether those relative to the transport board should stand I am not quite clear, because the commissioners are amenable to other departments. The Chest at Chatham and the dues to Greenwich Hospital are absolutely necessary to be included, the abuses in the former, and the frauds in the receipt of forfeited prize money and the sixpences to Greenwich Hospital, having arisen to such a pitch that some strong measures must be taken or those funds will sink to nothing. I understand from Tucker that Sir Charles Pole wishes to see me before he gives his answer to Mr. Addington. There does not seem the smallest occasion for his taking the trouble to come down here, as you can explain all the objects we have in view full as well as I can ; but if it will give him the smallest degree of satisfaction I shall certainly be very happy to see him.

Rochetts, 13th December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—My principal objection will be removed by the master of the *Abundance* continuing in charge of the stores, which are always better preserved and delivered by such trusty men as he is allowed to be than by commanders or lieutenants

who are not of the same stamp. I fear much delay will be occasioned and expense incurred by fitting up cabins, &c., for the accommodation of the officers who are to form the establishments ; and after all, if she is the sort of ship I apprehend her to be, you must give her convoy, for the Barbary cruisers will disregard the pennant should she carry the appearance of a merchant ship, and in that event visit her ; the stores are so much wanted that everything should give way to despatch.

I am very sorry to have failed in respect and attention to Sir Charles Pole, but I relied so much on Mr. Addington sounding him upon the subject, that out of delicacy I did not write to him, or mention the thing beyond our own circle. I rejoice, however, to find Sir Charles does not object, and I will thank you to convey the happiness I feel in the addition of his respectable name. After Pelly is mounted, I shall have very great pleasure in putting Captain Neville into a good sloop. Pray tell your brother so, and with our best wishes to Mrs. Markham, the little boy, you, and co., believe me to be, &c.

I do not recollect Sir A. Hamond saying what you relate about Tucker's brother, but the fact is certainly so, and I have no doubt it is known to all the navy board.

Rochetts, 14th December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—Nothing could be better done than your manner of prefacing the motion of last night. Lord Spencer is justly entitled to all you stated, and every opportunity should be taken to do him justice. Sir Evan Nepean has always maintained that the admiralty was competent to regulate ; but no man surely will contend that powers

are vested in that board to investigate, detect, and expose the numberless frauds and abuses which have existed, and do exist, in every branch of the civil department of the navy. Whoever holds this language is ignorant, or wishes that the ruinous system the country is staggering under should continue ; Lord Gardner is a perfectly honest man, but his judgment must be necessarily warped on this occasion. Sir A. Hamond has no ground to complain of inattention, for I communicated the positive necessity of a commission to him before I mentioned it even to you and Troubridge. He asked me whether it was to be a commission under the privy seal or parliament, and I rather inclined to the former, but upon further enquiry and consideration I decided for the latter.

I really do not know how to advise upon General Bentham's proposition. He has not told us of what use the chemist is, but having stated one as necessary when his establishment was first formed, he must continue for it now.

Mr. Sheffield we cannot do without, and, should no objection be made by any of the members of the board, the best way will be to put the matter into the hands of Bentham, subject, after he shall have paved the way with the two chemists, to our ultimate decision.

Lady St. Vincent desires me to say everything kind to your house and the opposite, for her, and I ever am yours most truly, &c.

The Bittern is a very proper convoy for the Abundance.

Rochetts, 17th December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—I have taken a little time to reflect upon the events of last night before I ventured

to answer your letter, as far as relates to myself, personally. I rejoice at my name having been left out of the commission ; how far the effect intended by the omission of it I am not competent to judge until I see in what manner the persons who are to form the board proceed, and until then it will become us to be perfectly silent and composed ; but the moment a disposition appears to render the operation nugatory, we have only one line to take. Nicholls is the fitter man of the two you name, if he applies to the business heartily. It has been observed by some people of discernment, that since the mutiny he has shown a considerable degree of indifference to the public service, and a proneness to let things stand as they are ; perhaps he may resume his former nerve and principle when he finds himself so eminently placed ; and as Sir Charles Pole, who is now at the head, prefers him, I really think it will be wise to accede. The same impropriety which attached to Tucker certainly reaches me, but it did not strike Mr. Addington when you asked whether he saw any objection. I rather incline to the opinion you formed last night of the cause which produced it, which is a sad yoke upon the neck of administration.

Do all you can to calm Sir Thomas Troubridge ; we shall find channels to convey information to some one or more of the commissioners, who will, I hope, make choice of a man for their secretary who is intelligent upon the subject of the civil department of the navy. Should this Act touch upon the admiralty office, we who have called for it cannot complain, or in truth now recall any part of the powers ; for what was necessary when I was spoke of as head of the commission is doubly so now. Tell Tucker I wish to see him on Sunday, and in the meanwhile Sir Thomas and you will discuss with

him what occurs from change of circumstances with him, that I may be master of all your ideas upon the subject.

Mr. Addington will be the sufferer should this great object for the public good be frustrated.

Rochetts, 17th December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—Upon more mature reflection I am of opinion that the admiralty cannot, unless I am in the commission, be made amenable to it, and that the enquiry must be confined to the subordinate offices. I have a bad headache, and am otherwise unwell, or I would go to town immediately. Mr. Addington will see the propriety of this alteration from the change he has judged it right to make in the nomination of commissioners. I wish this may reach you in time to prevent us from being reproached with lowering the high office we compose a material part of. It would be better to put the business off until after the recess, or lose the bill, than to go on with it in the way it now stands. In the latter event our road is plain and cannot be mistaken.

Rochetts, 23rd December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—The chancellor's mind has been perverted by the artful insinuations of those most guilty, which they have contrived to convey to him through the most respectable channel, and one that does, and ought to, govern his opinion in many and important cases, which the numerous occupations he has do not admit of his attending to minutely. I see by the papers that Lord Ellenborough was of essential use in the committee, and I rather think with you that the Duke of Clarence has done much more good than harm to the great object we have in

view. You may rely that every unguarded expression which has fallen from Sir Thomas and you has been circulated, and I have no doubt that the Lords Eldon,¹ Chatham,² Pelham,³ and Hobart⁴ have been operated upon to a certain degree, from a variety of quarters; but they will soon suspect that their informants are not quite free from suspicion of corruption, which, in truth, their late conduct has stamped in such legible characters that all unprejudiced minds must see the drift of the practices they have used to defeat or cripple the bill. Nicholls's letter is a true type of his character. The fraud upon the public committed by the navy and transport boards, with the profligate percentage on the contracts and the more criminal retrospect, in some instances, of the latter, should be brought forward. Dunstanville will not deny what he has acknowledged of the premiums he gave to Taylor, although he is not compellable. Whenever a gross refusal to declare a fact comes out, the commissioners will no doubt remark upon it, in order to show the necessity of further powers.

Rochetts, 24th December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—In my hurry to despatch the messenger back yesterday, I omitted to mention my full approbation of giving post commissions to the Captains Vashon and Malcolm in the way you propose—Captain V. to take rank from the dismissal of Captain Mackellar. In respect to the Pigmy, I am not quite clear that I have not given Lieutenant Shephard who commanded her with credit before, some encouragement to expect a reappointment to her. Tucker can inform you, either he or George Parker having answered Mr. Shephard's letter.

¹ Lord chancellor.

² Home secretary.

³ Master general of the ordnance.

⁴ Colonial secretary.

Should it prove otherwise, and Lord de Dunstanville's friend, Lieutenant Smith, is placed in a gun brig, the Pigmy may be devoted to the borough of Portsmouth. The chancellor has given a severe wound to the present administration. While the treasury is pursuing the defaulters of the army through all the regions of the earth and sea, the admiralty is refused the same powers, with which the former is furnished, to examine into the malpractices of persons in this department, who have amassed greater wealth by far than the army paymasters and commissaries, although their appointments have been less by two-thirds or more, without any authority to charge contingencies. If Mr. Addington is not aware of what will be said and written upon this subject, he will soon feel it. I am more concerned for him than I can express, because I know his intentions are for the public good, and that no man in his situation ever showed less attention to his personal interests, or aggrandisement, in any way. I fear the bill cannot be ready to receive the royal assent to-day unless great despatch was used, when it was sent back with the amendments to the Commons, and in all probability they will create some discussion.

With our best wishes of the season to you all, including your *vis-à-vis*, believe me to be, &c.

Mr. Clive has written strongly in favour of the enclosed; if my memory does not fail, this young man, or his mother for him, told an abominable lie, upon the discovery of which his commission was cancelled. I have taken the liberty to refer Mr. C. to you for an explanation.

Rochetts, 27th December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—As Tucker was here yesterday, and undertook to answer the points in your last

letter, I did not trouble you with one ; Mr. Tierney,¹ in the conversation you had with him on Friday, showed a thorough knowledge of the intrigues carrying on by certain persons, which I have a notion existed in Lord Spencer's time, and it is probable that Admiral Young, who is connected with Tierney by intermarriage, has given the latter information upon the subject. Unless corruption has crept into our office, I cannot see the policy of this intervention ; for one of the party, having very weighty obligations to me, one should think would not lightly take the side he is supposed to have done, and indeed avowed in some sort, although not to me.

Lady St. Vincent joins in every kind wish to Mrs. M. and the little boy, with, &c.

Remember us to Sir Thos. T. and Co.

Rochetts, 28th December, 1802.

My dear Sir,—I cannot express the sense I feel of your kindness to me throughout the discussion of the abused bill, which would certainly have occasioned much more anxiety on my part but for your attention in explaining, and reasoning upon it. The thing to be most regretted is the appearance of disunion in the members of government, and a person very near us has much to answer for on that subject ; had he given an opinion in the House of Commons adverse to the measure, either he or I must have gone out of office the day following, and should he utter a sentence of this sort in my presence or hearing the like must happen.

Mr. Addington and I have conversed more than once upon the possibility of obtaining a reinforce-

¹ Treasurer of the navy.

ment from the old opposition bench, and I have not failed to introduce the name of Sheridan, which he probably has been informed of by Charles Grey.¹ Mrs. Sheridan is related both to the Greys and to Lady St. Vincent and me, and I have always shown a degree of attention to him on the score of his talents. I can no otherwise account for his going an inch out of his way to give support to a measure we are so much interested in. He and Tierney are certainly right in their suggestion, that the commissioners should apply for an enlargement of their powers before they are gravelled. How are they to get at Mr. Dick's malpractices—those which so much pains have been taken to conceal relative to the state of prison ships at Jamaica, what has passed in the East Indies, and various other distant scenes, or in truth any of the intricate delinquencies at home? Can you by any unalarming means discover and ascertain the expense of marine clothing while it was carried on by the admiralty? I suspect a friend of yours is shy upon that point, and with greater reason than upon some others.

The navy estimate was duly sent to me, and I recollect having doubts whether Sir William Scott's additional salary ended with the war, or was continued for a limited time after the peace, on account of arrears of business; if my memory does not fail, the 500*l.* to him was written in pencil at the top of the paper, as if it had been left out by accident. Should the Speaker be correct, as I dare say he is, some explanation will be required, but Mr. Addington must be previously apprised of the error. It is very probable the proposition from the navy board of fixing permanent clerks for the drawing up of contracts may have come down in the box, and escaped my observation, for in general

¹ Afterwards Lord Howick and first lord, 1806.

it has been well stuffed. I have considered the subject a good deal since you was here, and the result is that, having expressed our astonishment at the loose manner this important branch of business has been conducted in pretty strong terms, we shall not be justified in slighting the remedy. I think, however, that a salary of 300*l.* per annum will be ample for the principal, and 150*l.* for the assistant at present ; the salary of the first named, or of both, to be increased to the amount of what is proposed by the commissioners of the navy three years hence. Moot this directly.

Pray go down to your farm, and look after the main chance. I heartily hope you will find everything right ; and with Lady St. Vincent's and my kind regards to Mrs. M., you, and the little boy, believe me to be, &c.

Tucker has got all Nepean's notes to me, and will tell you whether anything has been written about Sir William Scott, and what.

Rochetts, 10th January, 1803.

My dear Sir,—I return you many thanks for the trouble you have taken in considering these voluminous minutes with so much attention. Your remarks are judicious, some of which did not escape me in the cursory reading I gave to the minutes, more particularly the conduct of the deputy judge-advocate, and the admission of hearing evidences, which was done in several instances. The bias of Sir P. and Sir E. I was not aware of. Laying that aside, and every other consideration excepting the hissing on parade (for I do not lay much stress upon the subalterns avoiding Lieutenant Hill, or sending him to Coventry), I do think that was an outrage of the most dangerous tendency and ought

not to have gone unpunished. Unfortunately those who framed the charges have defeated that object.

I conclude the sentence has been confirmed and the court dissolved, because Sir Evan in his letter to me says that, in the opinion of the board, the observations, or rather a copy of them, should be sent to Lieutenant-General Innes without any comment. That the general should be removed from his situation there can be no manner of doubt; and the contempt Colonel Duncan Campbell is held in makes his removal necessary also, and Lieutenant-Colonel Berkeley may be placed in another division, at a convenient time; but upon what pretence Lieutenant Hill is to be dismissed I really do not know, for we have not the minutes of the proceedings of the court of enquiry before us, or at least I have never seen or heard of them. Captain Lodington's evidence is the only ground we can take, and it would be a strong, if not a harsh, measure to run down Hill, who is upheld by all the officers of the rank in the division with the exception of Captain Lodington. What I now write is influenced by policy, not by feeling. What do you think of laying the proceedings on Captain Lee's court-martial and those on Lieutenant Bunce's before the law officers of the crown, and taking their opinion upon the legality of them, more particularly the propriety of mixing criminality in the acquittal of the latter, and the censure passed on Lieutenant Hand in the former? With such an intrigue against us we cannot be too cautious. I return your observations on the minutes, but if you have no objection, I will thank you to let Tucker take a copy of them.

Lady St. Vincent joins in every kind wish to Mrs. M., you, and co., and I am, &c.

What answer was sent to the court when the

remonstrance against the subalterns for withholding evidence was sent to the board? I rather wonder that it was not inserted in the minutes.

Captain Lee does not positively assert in his evidence that Lieutenant Taylor was in the group ; his words are, I think he was, but can't be positive.

Rochetts, 13th January, 1803.

My dear Sir,—It appears to me that Sir Richard Bickerton's letter of the 7th calls for the enquiry we have in contemplation ; why he did not institute it I am at a loss to guess. In forming the order to enquire into what happened in the mole, the precise words made use of by Captain Aylmer and Captain White, in their letters No. 2, 4, and 12, should be inserted, or the letters referred to, taking care not to state more than will be borne out by them. It is certainly a proper prelude to the other charges to begin with this, and I cannot suggest a better mode of proceeding than that proposed in your letter, unless any doubt should arise of the legality of Sir Richard Bickerton's sitting as president. This may be ascertained by turning to the articles of war. I think Sir Richard has received no appointment as commander-in-chief. The sooner the order can be prepared the better.

I enclose a letter to Mr. Villiers, in which I have referred him to you, until my health enables me to confer with him. With the best wishes of all here to your whole colony, believe me to be, &c.

All the papers which relate to Gibraltar are returned to Sir E. Nepean by post.

If we appoint a judge-advocate for the corps of marines, he should be a lawyer of spirit and character.

Rochetts, 16th January, 1803.

My dear Sir,—I am very much surprised at the renewal of the subject of the New South Wales corps being relieved by the Royal Marines, because Lord Hobart assured me he would concoct another plan with the Duke of York, and I should hear no more of it. Should the measure be again seriously agitated it can only be done in the way I proposed, which is by an estimate of the expense (in which the supplying ships to convey the convicts must be included) being laid before the House of Commons and voted separately, for I never can consent to the expense of that consuming colony becoming a part of the estimate of the naval force of the country, nor in the present state of politics shall we be justified in furnishing more than fifty marines for the new establishment. The privates of the New South Wales corps were for the most part felons, and I have understood are among the most abandoned of the colony. I therefore strongly object to our having anything to do with them, and should you see Mr. Sullivan, have the goodness to say that I rely on Lord Hobart's engagement to release me from any further application upon the subject. General Grinfield's application, carrying Commodore Stopford's approbation by his signature, gave it great weight: a 44-gun ship for the conveyance of troops from one island to another, either for the purpose of change or reinforcement, may be of the utmost importance to the defence of our numerous colonies, situated as they are in the vicinity of French colonies, but she must not be under the orders of General Grinfield. The naval commanding officer should be instructed to give directions to the commander of her as well as to the captains of all other ships under his command, to comply with any request made by the general for the employment of

her in the conveyance of troops ; as to the transports required we can give no opinion, nor take any part whatever therein. If Captain Bass does not justify himself to the satisfaction of the board, the *Gannet* must be reserved for Lord William Fitzroy ; at the same time I feel much disappointed that Captain Dumaresq will be so much longer without a sloop. In all probability some others of the newly married commanders will soon be tired of their sloops, and you will have an opportunity of placing him in one, tolerably well manned. Your reasons for retaining the words are sound, and I should not have made any alteration, had I referred to the letters. Lieutenant Whorwood and all others who can give information of what passed on the mole should be ordered to attend the court-martial, and if the *Active* is still at Gibraltar she should be ordered up for that purpose. The navy board must be informed of the intention of making all the blocks necessary for his majesty's navy in the dockyards, and directions given them to provide materials accordingly ; at the same time the pleasure of the admiralty board touching the purchase of the *lignum vitæ* offered by Mr. Taylor should be signified, and his last proposition appears to me fair. Tucker has informed me of the imprudence of Captain Aylmer in directing the naval storekeeper to receive the spars from the American squadron, which must be noticed, and Sir Richard Bickerton instructed to forbid the captains under his orders interfering with the duty of the naval officers, who will have directions to complete their stores from their abstract, and not to furnish any extra, without the special order of the commander-in-chief, on whose strict economy the board will rely. Tucker will communicate my opinion respecting the purchase of timber.

Rochetts, Tuesday night.

My dear Sir,—I have taken the liberty to cut off a part of the first report upon the navy board by inserting instead of, 'was not had,' &c., 'which upon further investigation their lordships have discovered was totally unfounded.' In reprobating their conduct regard must be had to our own dignity, and some consideration shown to a board which, though inferior, ought not to be too much let down. I very much approve the substituting marines for the miserable warders and watchmen in Deptford and Woolwich yards, but the difficulties which Colonel Campbell seemed prepared to make will I fear occasion more discussion than we can well brook. The sooner Bentham can give in his plan for the rope house at Woolwich the better ; he should also get on with Plymouth.

Lady St. Vincent sends her best wishes to you, &c., and I am, &c.

*MR. OSBORNE MARKHAM TO ADMIRAL
MARKHAM*

Bishopthorpe, July 20, 1803.

My dear Jack,—If you think me properly qualified, and that I can learn the duties of the office by attention, I should not hesitate a moment in accepting it. Of course I should give up the whole line of professional business (which at present brings in little, but puts me, in travelling, to great expense) except my ecclesiastical preferment, which you know I can leave to my deputy as heretofore. Before

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I accept it, however (if offered), would it not be right to consult Lord Ellenborough, who has always been so great a friend? My father thinks it would be right, and if you do, may I beg of you to speak to him on the subject? If I was to remain in the profession for a dozen or twenty years to come I should, at the end of that time, think myself most fortunate in having such an offer, and therefore do not hesitate now in sending you this answer. My father is wonderfully well, and Willie very stout. All the rest are well. I hope that the trouble and vexation of Maria's weaning is now well over. With truest thanks for your kindness, I am, dear Jack, &c.

*LORD ST. VINCENT TO MR. OSBORNE
MARKHAM*

Rochetts, August 24, 1803.

In selecting you for a seat at the navy board, I am governed by zeal for the good of the public, and I feel confident that you will discharge the functions of the office in a manner honourable to yourself and beneficial to your country; happy at the same time that the choice fell upon the member of a family for which I entertain the highest esteem.¹

¹ In a speech in the House of Lords, in May 1804, Lord St. Vincent said that, with the exception of Mr. Osborne Markham, there was not one member of the navy board who did his duty to the public or was competent to his office. This led to an attack on Osborne Markham on a change of ministry by his colleagues. They wrote to the new first lord, on October 29, 1804, complaining that Mr. Markham used expressions conveying strong reflections on the conduct of the navy board, and refused to sign papers. They also complained that he kept a book in which he noted what they said, which they thought irregular and dangerous. Mr. Markham replied that he differed in opinion with the rest of the board on various points, and explained that

Rochetts, 18th August, 1803.

My dear Sir,—Many thanks for the sketch of an answer to Sir William Scott, which Tucker has sent me. It is a little too peppery, and, I think, rather inclines to make me a party; I will, however, avail myself of some of the information it contains.

I hope you will meet Mrs. Markham and the children in good health; pray remember me kindly to them, and believe me to be, &c.

Rochetts, 26th August, 1803.

My dear Sir,—We must send Lord William Fitzroy to some foreign station where he may be likely to obtain promotion; the sooner the better, as his Grace of Grafton is very exigent.

My friend Sir A. Mitchell is playing the whole game in respect to Lieutenant Compton, having removed him into the Driver, although I desired Lieutenant Lisle might have an order to command her in case Captain Oughton found it absolutely necessary to quit the Leander, so that when Captain Macdonnell joins the Lily he will supersede Mr. Lisle instead of Mr. Compton; it therefore becomes necessary to anticipate this by giving a commission to Lisle to command the Driver, which will set it all right. It should bear the same date as Francis Fane's commission for the Leander. Sir E. Nepean has sent me Lord Hobart's letter, and the intelligence which occasioned it. Lord Keith has acted wisely in

his memorandum book merely contained the grounds on which he had acted on various occasions, with notes to aid his memory, that it never left the board room, and was kept in a locked drawer. On September 1, 1805, Lord Barham removed Mr. Markham from the board and offered him another appointment, which he declined.

In 1821 Mr. Osborne Markham married Lord St. Vincent's niece, Martha Ricketts, and they inherited Rochetts on the earl's death. Mr. Markham died at Rochetts in 1827.

directing Rear-Admiral Thornbrough to carry the measure into effect if he judges it feasible. I don't know who Mr. Sullivan's correspondent is, but I fear he will bring some disgrace upon his Majesty's arms, for every unsuccessful attempt we make will produce that effect.

I hope you feel no further inconvenience from your gout. It comes rather too early in life, yet I hope will act more as a preventive of other disorders than a troublesome one in itself.

Mr. Kent, purser of the *Salvador del Mundo*, is, I believe, a fair candidate for the stewardship of the Naval Hospital at Plymouth; and if you or Sir T. Troubridge do not see or hear anything to the contrary, let him be appointed.

I have a very handsome letter from your brother on his appointment to the navy board, where I conclude he has taken his seat.

Say everything kind for us to Mrs. M. when you write, and, with our best wishes to you and Sir Thomas, believe me to be, &c.

It may not be amiss to appoint another lieutenant to the district between Swansea and Bristol, that the Duke of Cumberland may have him to play with. If you know any suitable person, fix him to the spot at or near headquarters.

George Parker¹ is just arrived with your letter. If the lord lieutenant asks for Sea Fencibles he must have them, but I do not know that it is necessary to name them in Whitshed's instructions.

Rochetts, 15th September, 1803.

My dear Sir,—Captain Bligh's conduct was certainly very injudicious. It is astonishing to me that Duckworth has not gone up to St. Domingo and

¹ Lord St. Vincent's nephew, and private secretary.

directed the operations against the French in person. The cabinet must be consulted upon the instructions necessary to be given respecting the conduct he ought to observe towards the blacks, and I will be in town to-morrow morning with a view to consult Lord Hobart upon it, and to settle the answer to be given to his letter about the defence of the Firth of Forth.

Lady St. Vincent is much the same as to health, but her spirits somewhat recovered by my sojourn here. She joins me in every kind wish to you and yours and to the Troubridges, and I am, &c.

Rochetts, 13th October, 1803.

My dear Sir,—Many thanks for your letter. The flag officer for Leith must not be a man connected with the country. Hamilton therefore is out of the question, for he would be readily drawn in to approve any suggestion from the party, which I have long observed to be influenced more by politics than the defence of the capital of Scotland. I am not sufficiently acquainted with Admiral Russell to decide upon him; but I remember the time when I should have considered Admiral Bligh as well qualified for the employment. We must prepare an additional force for the defence of Ireland, for the first attempt will be made in that quarter. Eight ships of the line, if we can furnish them, should be attached to Lord Gardner. Will Sir T. Graves do to command under him? If he will, the Foudroyant might be immediately appropriated to his flag.

The precautions about Dungeness and the oars are very wise; and I shall be glad when arrangements are made for anchoring the cruisers within the Flemish banks, for that coast cannot be vigilantly watched by ships under sail.

Lady St. Vincent has had a tolerable night, and I shall certainly be with you in the morning.

Rochetts, 2nd November, 1803.

My dear Sir,—You have my best thanks for demurring upon the appointment of Captain Thomas Drury to the *Courageux*, and I hope the service has suffered no injury by the delay. Captain Thomas Bertie I only know by reputation, which is very much in his favour.

These hospital ships should be fitted up under the direction of Baird or Weir, or they will be filled with cabins, whereby the public will be put to much needless expense and the sick rooms reduced in size and convenience. It will be necessary also for the sick and wounded board to name a naval surgeon or surgeon's mate to be assistant to the surgeon of Plymouth yard, or that appointment will be made a borough job, as it always has been ; and we must take care that they do not select a man of the place, or his whole time will be devoted to private practice.

Lady St. Vincent is rather better to-day, and with many thanks for the kind solicitude you express about her, I ever am, &c.

Rochetts, 3rd November, 1803.

My dear Sir,—I am not surprised that Mr. A. was a little fidgety when it blew so strong from the eastward, but if Admiral Cornwallis makes short tacks he cannot be driven to the westward, the flood tide making so many hours longer than the ebb between Ushant and the Saints.

You have determined wisely to reinforce the Ferrol and Irish squadrons, and the latter should have a flag officer to direct it. I hope Sir Robert Calder will have more confidence than when he

served with me ; his dread of approaching the shore at that time was truly ridiculous, and I was under the necessity of instructing the master not to pay the smallest regard to his influence, when called upon to give an opinion. Have the goodness to inform Sir Thomas Troubridge that I agree with him in his opinion that the Neptune should precede the Prince in being sent to sea.

I enclose some communications from Mr. Rose, and I wish Jackson to be instructed to go to Christ Church after he has finished at Southampton.

We are better to-day, and I will be in town on Monday, or sooner if any event arises to make my presence necessary.

With my best wishes to you all, believe me to be, &c.

Rochetts, 3rd December, 1803.

My dear Sir,—My head is too bad to write to Sir E. Nepean, but I will thank you to desire he will send me a copy of all the directions he has given to Rear-Admiral Montagu by Mr. Tucker to-morrow. I wrote one letter to the rear-admiral at the request of Lord Hawkesbury, signified to me by Mr. Hammond, desiring he would furnish one or more vessels to Captain Wright as occasion might require on a very urgent mission. It is absolutely necessary that the whole of this dark business should be cleared up.

Rochetts, 26th December, 1803.

My dear Sir,—It will be best not to show Lord Keith's letters to Mr. Hammond, but to relate to him what may be proper. I did not know that Paddy Russell was initiated in these mysteries. I send you a letter from Charles Grey about a Newcastle-Shields man, which you will act upon as you think fit. He is a man I wish to keep well with for

a variety of reasons ; in any event, I will thank you to furnish me with an ostensible answer.

Charles Paget wants a Lieutenant Watson to be allowed to go to the hospital and to return to the *Endymion* when cured—at least so I understand his letter.

Our best wishes of the season attend Mrs. M., you, and the children, and I always am, &c.

I observe that Tucker has given you the certificate about the Shields man, therefore do not trouble you with Mr. Grey's letter.

Rochetts, 27th December, 1803.

My dear Sir,—Reflecting on Captain Essington's letter, which probably was written in concert, it may be proper to embark the carronades and shot on board the fitted boats and vessels, the masters of which will undertake the care of them without charge to the public. The powder and match would become unserviceable in a few days by the damp, at this season, if not made away with ; besides the hazard of blowing up the boats, and the arms would be ruined. As to medical aid, I see no resource but inviting the practitioners in the towns upon the coast to attach themselves to the corps of Sea Fencibles in the manner they do to the volunteer corps, where the most eminent men serve without fee or reward. While upon the subject—it seems to me that a vast expense is incurred by the transport board in the appointment of persons to afford medical aid to the prisoners on parole, and I think Sir R. George¹ will acknowledge that much abuse grows out of this system ; when it commenced I know not. I am clearly of opinion, however, that they should defray this expense out of their own.

¹ First commissioner for transport service.

pockets or be sent on board the prison ships, where reasonable accommodation may be afforded to inferior officers on parole who protest their inability to defray the expense of medical assistance when required. A measure of this kind cannot be got rid of without carrying the transport board with us, and perhaps it may be as well to talk to Captain Hamilton upon the subject before Sir R. George is spoken to.

I think Captain Essington should have consulted Lord Keith about arming the boats in the first instance; he has long been contending for independence, therefore a reference to Lord Keith may not be amiss upon all the representations he makes which relate to floating defence.

I concur in opinion with you and Sir T. Troubridge that the leaning of the attorney-general to former habits and attachments has operated on his mind in the suggestion that it is beneath the dignity of government to prosecute for flagitious libel; and when I recollect that the 'True Briton' and 'Sun' were under the immediate protection of the late treasury, and transferred to the present, who very honourably discontinued all intercourse with them when they perceived the virulent attacks upon the admiralty, I cannot entertain a doubt that Mr. Perceval wishes to avoid filing the information. I hope he will leave the whole to Erskine & Co. as he did in the case of the Hedges, and thereby escape the silent reproach of his old political friends.

Rochetts, 28th December, 1803.

My dear Sir,—I am glad you have ordered some more fishing vessels to be fitted at Leith, and I very much approve the directions proposed to be given to Vice-Admiral Bligh about the Isle of May.

D

Mr. Whidbey¹ is wrongly informed about Skaite Bay. The number of shipwrecks annually in that quarter is frightful ; and when the ships are caught with an easterly wind their only chance of preserving the lives of the crews is to run them on the beach a little before high water.

I am sorry to learn that the pilots are again troublesome. As the late parliamentary measure originated with the lord warden, it becomes his duty either to enforce it or to bring in another bill of a more efficacious tendency, and I hope Lord Keith will torment him until he does the one or the other, the whole depending upon him. The Dover pilot who gave us the false intelligence relative to the equipments in the Texel should be looked after. I return Mr. Gillitt's papers to Sir Thomas Troubridge, and advise his seeing him again with a view to obtain information touching the construction of frigates at Bengal, and whatever may facilitate the supply of large timber to form the frame of the ship of the line at Bombay.

The wind has suddenly shifted to the NW, and I augur will soon be at NE, with frost and snow. I fear Admiral Cornwallis is too bare of two-decked ships to be able to detach one to Bantry Bay. Those lately arrived at Plymouth should be pushed out again with the utmost despatch ; the Montagu at Portsmouth will I hope soon be ready. Supposing you order the Prince to join Sir R. Calder, will there be a sufficient number of three-deckers off Brest ?

Rochetts, 9th January, 1804.

My dear Sir,—I have written to Mr. Addington and related everything that passed between Mr. Marsden and me, including the prize office ; and I

¹ Master attendant of Woolwich yard.

have distinctly told Mr. A. that on the most mature consideration of the various qualifications for a secretary of the admiralty, which I enumerated, Mr. Tucker is the only person I know who is fit for the office ; that in him they are all combined, and I am not afraid of a comparison between him and any predecessor, excepting in the graces. As it is possible you may see the Speaker, I put you in possession of this, although he probably will receive it from Mr. Addington. I have the happiness to find Lady St. Vincent less agitated than I expected, but much shook. She joins in every kind wish to Mrs. M., you and yours, and to the Troubridges, and I am, &c.

[*Secret.*]

Rochetts, 11th January, 1804.

My dear Sir,—A messenger from the treasury has brought an answer from Mr. A. which accords with the judgment I at first formed, that it would not be seemly to bring Tucker into the first office at once ; but where the man is to be found in any degree of comparison capable of filling it I know not, and I am persuaded that in the ranks of the official departments no such person exists. I will thank you not to impart beyond the Speaker my having suggested Tucker.

I will write to Lord Moira by post, and also to Vice-Admiral Bligh, and state that all the armed boats must be placed under the orders of Captain Clements, and the men protected in like manner with all other fencible corps. The map you have sent down will enable me to answer Sir J. St. Clair Erskine's reveries.

We must be very cautious in our strictures upon Lord Gardner, who will seek protection from the Castle of Dublin, which is a ticklish quarter. He is a nervous man, and I daresay thinks he shall be

seized on in his bed by the ragamuffins at Cove. The only notice I can advise being taken of his correspondence with Mr. Wickham is to direct him to communicate to the secretary, with as little delay as possible, any representations he may have made, or shall have occasion to make, to the chief secretary, or other member of the Government of Ireland. His number of frigates should be kept up, and I think the *Euryalus* may now be spared, as Captains Vesey and Elphinstone must be in a state to join Lord Keith. Sir Thomas Troubridge had best suggest to Admiral Thornbrough the hoisting of his flag on board the *Defence* or any other 74 that happens to be with him when the Dutch squadron comes out, *pro tempore*, and we will give him the first 74 that is vacant. The *Illustrious* should be placed under the orders of Lord Keith, and sent to Yarmouth.

Lady St. Vincent is better.

Rochetts, 17th February, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I omitted to mention to you yesterday that George Murray had called upon me with his little boy and expressed a very great desire to serve under my orders, and of all the other candidates he is by far the most acceptable to, &c.

Hibernia, St. Helen's, 12th March, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—Old Wallis is walking about town and telling every one he meets that the Marquis of Bucks says he must not accept of anything but a commissionership of the navy, for which he is less fit than old James at the bottom of the admiralty stairs. Pray tell Mr. Grey this from me, that his conscience may not be surprised.

We are getting under way with the *Ville de*

Paris, the Mars not having got out from Spithead last evening. Orders are despatched to Captain Oliver to join us off Ushant, looking into Torbay, should the wind come to the westward before he reaches the Berry Head.

Hibernia, in Cawsand Bay, 15th March, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—I can readily imagine the quandary poor Marsden was in upon the rumour of the Dutch squadron being out. He will be most happy to retire, if a good provision is made for him. I never expect answers to my letters, knowing as I do that you will act for the best.

The picture I sent you of the total want of vigour, discipline, and subordination at Portsmouth is much heightened at this port, where nothing is thought of but contrivance to delay equipment and to frustrate the orders issued by superiors. The moment a ship arrives she is stripped, and her pretended defects coloured in a way that makes me sick. I could not avoid giving the captain of the Windsor Castle a lick for the absurdity of his when he came on board last night. Captain Lawford was once a good fellow, but since he has got rich he is to the full as dilatory and negligent as any man I have seen, insomuch I have desired Admiral Young to order him into Cawsand Bay immediately, otherwise every man belonging to the *Impétueux* would be in the hospital. She has been out of the shipwrights' hands some days; nevertheless Captain Lawford was of opinion yesterday she could not come out of Hamoaze before the latter end of the month.

Mr. Jeffrey is in such desperate circumstances, in every point of view, that he will go the whole length. It is strongly suspected that Sir Andrew Hamond is in collusion with him, and has given

him a lucrative contract, drawn up in the name of Lenthorn, a creature of his. Nicholls will probably be able to sift this.

Captain Oliver, of the *Mars*, deserves praise for having got through the buoys on Wednesday, and for stopping in Torbay to set up his rigging. I hear Sir John Gore has made woeful complaints to Sir Charles Cotton by telegraph of the inadequacy of his ship's company and slackness of rigging, &c. In short, I hear of nothing but grievances, trouble, difficulties, and impossibilities all round me, and I fancy Admiral Young is wearied out and contents himself with giving orders, for I have already had enough of stay-tape and buckram from him.

Without a squadron of good two-deck ships constantly kept off the Black Rocks, under an able officer, the French may go in and out of Brest with impunity.

I learn from disinterested men, inhabitants of Plymouth, that the mock enquiry made by Weir has done incredible mischief in the Hospital, which is going to the devil as fast as possible, every man who wishes it being invalidated.

Hibernia, Falmouth Harbour, 16th March, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—Sir Charles Cotton informs me that the squadron has lost twenty men or more by desertion, and that the temptations are so great that the evil will increase. The sending ashore for fresh beef is stated as the principal cause; I have therefore directed the contractor to send it off, as in Torbay and other ports, and I will by to-morrow's post write a public letter to Mr. Marsden on the subject. In the meanwhile I will thank you to talk to Mr. Marsh upon the subject, that no obstacle

to this essential measure may be started at the victualling board when the admiralty refers to it.

I find Sir John Gore in better mood than I expected, and I hope you will be able to give him a few good seamen soon, for by every account I have received, the *Revenge* is very much undermanned.

An abominable, ill-contrived cabin stove has very nearly blinded and choked me; I have therefore come to a resolution to burn no more fires there, and must clothe accordingly.

You will get no good out of the *Windsor Castle*, which ship ought to be paid off and her men distributed.

Hibernia, in Falmouth Harbour, 18th March, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—Upon enquiry I find Captain Norway has an order from the admiralty to give assistance to the master attendant when called upon; but he acts the important to such a degree as to impede rather than forward the service, which would be much better performed by a lieutenant than by an officer of higher rank; for the surgeon is turned out of his apartment to give the captain the whole accommodation, and the hospital deck incommoded by making room for the surgeon and other officers. The *Experiment* storeship should have a master to command her instead of a lieutenant, which would make room for Mr. Black; but you must place a better boatswain in the sheer hulk than the present one, who is wholly incompetent.

The ward-room of the *Barfleur* is, by Sir Joseph Yorke's account, a scene of licentiousness and profligacy, and he states that the removal of one of the marine lieutenants would in his opinion operate powerfully to set matters right. He is gone on board to ascertain the division to which he belongs,

and I much wish for an order to discharge him to quarters ; and if the board should judge fit to issue it, I will state the reason to the commanding officer of the division.

FROM JOHN PARKER FOR LORD ST. VINCENT

Hibernia, Falmouth Harbour, 19th March, 1806.

Dear Sir,—Lord St. Vincent (who I am sorry to say has coughed very much to-day) has directed me to forward the enclosed copies of letters as the full account of the transaction to which he alluded in his letter of yesterday. I am

Yours very truly,
JOHN PARKER.

[*Copy.*]

H.M.S. Barfleur, March 19th, 1806.

My Lord,—Lieutenant Edmd. A. Charteris, of the Portsmouth division of Royal Marines, embarked on board H.M. ship under my command, having on the evening of the 17th instant in the ward-room behaved to Lieutenant R. Alcock, his superior officer, in a manner highly dishonourable to the feelings of that gentleman and in direct violation of the 23rd Article of War ; and it appearing by many accounts that this is by no means the first time that the decency and good order of that mess place has been disturbed by similar scenes :

I take leave to enclose Lieutenant Alcock's letter to me on the occasion, submitting to your lordships' wisdom for the best remedy that can be provided against a recurrence of similar licentiousness.

I have further to remark that Lieutenant De Rippe, of the navy, though strongly implicated in

the proceedings alluded to, is very young and I trust has been misled. I have the honour to be very respectfully,

Your lordship's devoted servant,
(Signed) JOSEPH YORKE.

The Right Honourable Earl St. Vincent,
Admiral of the Fleet.

Letter alluded to in the above.

Sir,—The conduct of Lieutenant De Rippe of the navy, and Lieutenant Charteris of the marines, serving on board H.M.S. Barfleur under your command, being highly unofficer-like and personally insulting to me, 'in direct violation of the 23rd Article of War,' on the evening of Sunday last, between the hours of seven and eight:

I have to request you will take the necessary steps, and afford me that redress which the service directs.

I have the honour to remain,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) R. ALCOCK.

To Sir Joseph Sidney Yorke, Kt., M.P.,
Captain of H.M. ship the Barfleur,
Falmouth Harbour.

Hibernia, off Ushant, 27th March, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—You have, enclosed, a *précis* of our own order for establishing the complement of this ship, and you may guess my surprise and disappointment on viewing forty-five of the most filthy creatures that ever were embarked; there

must be something radically wrong in the *Salvador del Mundo*, originating in that animal *Dilkes*, and continued under his successor, for the skins of these poor creatures were coated with dirt and could not have been washed—no, not even their hands and faces—for a length of time, insomuch I tremble for the health of this ship's crew ; for we had fourscore upon the sick list owing to the sloppy and blowing weather we have experienced since sailing from *St. Helen's*, before the receipt of this germ of disease. While upon the subject of health let me call your attention to the deplorable state the hulks at *Plymouth* are in, and to request that they may alternately be cleared of their ballast, the limbers and wells cleaned and purified, and the masters attendant required to inspect them frequently, and to report through the commissioner to the admiralty whether the commanders of the ships, whose crews are on board them, do their duty in preserving the same cleanliness and economy observed on board their proper ships.

No provisions but what are absolutely necessary for the people should be removed into them, and the holds shut up in such a manner that no filth or dead animals can be thrown into it. The crews of the *Impétueux* and *Centaur*, with those of other ships, I have no doubt have been ruined by diseases generated from these causes.

This poor young man, *Frederick*, son of *Sir John*, will go into a galloping consumption if not sent to a warmer and drier climate. *William Henderson*, appointed to act in his room, is nephew to the gallant *Wilmot* slain on the walls of *Acre*.

Hibernia, off the Black Rocks, 28th March, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—Everything being compromised on board the *Barfleur*, no retrospect can take place.

The *Tromp* was armed and placed by us as the defence of the entrance of Falmouth Harbour; she is now disarmed and moored in St. Just Pool as an hospital ship, her guns removed and the gun-deck turned into an hospital chamber, and every other part berthed up.

In the winter months Cawsand Bay is a very unsafe place for large ships to resort to—dangerous in the extreme, and such a swell that five days out of seven nothing can lay alongside of them. Several have been put to the utmost hazard of knocking their bottoms out. The captains are ashore, and the lieutenants will not turn out in the night to strike the yards and topmasts and veer cable in time. The vigilance of Penn has preserved some from inevitable destruction. Plymouth Sound is become shoaler than it was, and if the embankments forming above Catwater are not put an immediate stop to, and the tide suffered to flow as formerly, not only Catwater will be ruined, but the Sound too—Messrs. Rennie and Co. will explain this in their report—and I see no other chance of resisting the insatiable ambition of the ruler of France but making Plymouth Sound a secure mole at any expense, for the difficulty of getting out of Falmouth Harbour in winter time is so great it cannot be depended upon; in other respects much may be made of it.

I conclude Admiral Eliab Harvey is to go to the Mediterranean after his cruise is out. I therefore intend to give him the command of the detachment which is to cover Ferrol and Vigo.

Hibernia, close under Ushant, 29th March, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—Captain Bowen informs me an order of council of recent date admits of meritorious masters being made lieutenants. When Captain Rathborne joins I shall be better informed; in the meanwhile, should you fall in with any of the other captains quoted in the enclosed, have the goodness to inquire into the merits of the writer.

I cannot conceive what is become of Sir Charles Cotton and the ships we expect from Plymouth and Portsmouth.

We gibe between Ushant and the Black Rocks in the day, stand off at night, and in at four o'clock in the morning. Mars anchored off the Black Rocks; Diamond, l'Aigle, and small craft off the Parquette; and the Crescent looks out to the northward of Ushant. I cannot approve the rendezvous of my predecessor 'seven leagues SW of Ushant,' and intend to change it for 'well in with Ushant' during an easterly wind. Upon conversing with an intelligent midshipman of this ship, who was in the Amethyst when Sir J. Duckworth fell in with the French squadron off the Canaries, I am convinced it has gone to the southward, destined either for the Cape of Good Hope or to do us as much mischief as possible about St. Helena and Ascension; should Sir J. Warren proceed to the Cape de Verds he will probably get some scent of that squadron, which could not be the one Duckworth smote at St. Domingo. I send you the young man's observations during the two days they were in sight of the French squadron because they do him much credit; his name is Pitt, and he has lately passed his examination for a lieutenant, and was a shipmate of mine in the Argo.

We have this moment discovered three ships of the line and a cutter, which gives me hopes the

whole will join soon ; it is very hazy and we cannot see at a greater distance than two or three leagues.

[*Private.*]

Hibernia, near Ushant, 9th April, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—Many thanks for your letter of the 4th. A despatch from Lord Gardner has enabled me to anticipate the necessary communication of the probable approach of Linois to the admirals commanding the four detached squadrons, and you will perceive that I have lost no time in doing the same respecting the Prussians, an additional rose to the bed of Lord Castlereagh. What animals this offal of Pitt is composed of ! Signal after signal with guns, which has been almost incessant ever since my arrival on this station, having produced no effect, I yesterday gave out a strong injunction both to this and the inshore squadron, a copy of which is enclosed, and we are pretty well dressed this morning.

There are several lieutenants wanting in different ships, and I am applied to for them, but unless there is a chance of a commission I am cautious of giving acting orders ; first, that you may not think I am greedy, and next, that my young men have no money and these appointments create expense.

I hope and trust you will not give occasion to postpone the motion of Mr. Jeffrey against me, for it is not pleasant to read of this fellow's impertinence.

Say everything kind to Mrs. Markham and her boys for your very steady friend, &c.

Remember me to the Archbishop, Mrs. Markham, your sisters, and Osborne.

*Extract of a Letter from Admiral Young, dated
Plymouth Dock, 30 March, 1806*

‘Four other ships are in Cawsand Bay, which have within these few days been put under your lordship’s orders ; they are perfectly ready for sea, but [not] knowing for what service you may intend them, and not having received any directions about them, I do not venture to send them to you.’

Hibernia, near Ushant, 10th April, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—The Gibraltar has joined, but the two ships of the line lately come down from the arsenal are getting on so fast I cannot detach any more of my number, and I expect to see three or four more of the enemy’s ships appear in the course of this month or early in May, being persuaded they have given a temporary repair to their very old ships. Captain Lawford reported to me this morning that he observed one ship of the line under sail yesterday, probably to shift her berth, and a brig came into Camaret Bay. The whole appear upon the *qui vive*, therefore send me some frigates to watch them, for I have now the Diamond only, and you know what a dull dog Elphinstone is. When the Latona rejoins I shall nail my Master Wood there, and the Penelope is destined to relieve Captain Rathborne, for those who loiter in port must have Siberia.¹

Pray state to Lord Howick the merit of young Mosse, clerk of the rope yard at Portsmouth, who has been the protector of his mother and family ever since his father was killed at Copenhagen.² Had I gone again to the admiralty he would have filled the first vacant office of clerk of the survey.

¹ The inshore station by the Black Rocks.

² Captain of the Monarch at Copenhagen.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 11th April, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—After my letter of yesterday was closed, to be ready for the pilchard schooner, the Gibraltar exhibited such a proof of the ignorance of the late navy board as was quite shocking; our five ships of three decks were as steady and quiet as in Portsmouth harbour, and the launches were sent to the Gibraltar for bullocks and such stores as she had brought out for the squadron, when lo! she rolled so deep (her upper deck ports in the water) that the launch of this ship could not lay alongside, and in attempting to get our bullocks out, one was killed and the others bruised in a horrid manner; and after three hours consumed in this fruitless attempt the other launches returned to their ships, *re infectâ*. Had the late system continued much longer our whole navy would have been ruined, and unless Lord Howick can get rid of all the old leaven at every one of the subordinate boards, Nicholls will be traversed, all his objects frustrated, and he will resign in dudgeon.

These are not times to practise managements, for the extraordinary character who governs France may build 200 sail of the line in four years. The forests he succeeds to on the borders of the Adriatic are *à portée* to the magnificent arsenal at Venice, that wonders may be achieved in it. What our navy board has been about in neglecting to bring the trees which were fallen away I know not; for there were at Malta and other parts of the Mediterranean abundance of large copper-bottomed transports with raft ports doing nothing.

Hibernia, within the Black Rocks, 14th April, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—Did you ever read such a madly arrogant paragraph as that in Lord Cochrane's

public letter, where he lugs in Lieutenant Parker for the avowed purpose of attacking me, his commander-in-chief? Pray explain it to Lord Howick.

I am sure the French squadron in Brest will attempt to put to sea the first favourable opportunity, or they would have lowered their yards and topmasts in the very strong gale we had last night and this morning.

I pant for the Belleisle; with her and l'Impétueux anchored at the Black Rocks I shall be more at ease. There should always be two good frigates stationed before Port L'Orient, where the *entrée* and *sortie* have no interruption at present.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 4th May, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—Many thanks for both your letters. The best thing we can do is to keep a good look-out and continue the squadron as they are now placed, until we receive certain intelligence of the squadron under Willaumez and Jerome Bonaparte.

Hibernia, close to Ushant, 7th May, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—For God's sake put Lord Howick upon his guard against the artful and presumptuous proceedings of Tom Wolley, who thinks he sees his way to the top of the navy office, or some other important situation. He is the meanest thief in the whole profession, abounding as it still does with Cape Bar men.

You must take some strong means against the manner in which Harness appoints the surgeons.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 8th May, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—I trouble you with the enclosed, not as a suitor, but as a matter of justice

to the writers. I wish Mr. Windham would show a little attention to Sir Joseph Banks. Show his answer to Captain Short to Lord Howick, who will communicate his feelings to Mr. Windham.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 16th May, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—My plans are not a little deranged by the measure of sending Sir Richard Strachan and his squadron off the Canaries, which is certainly a very wise one. I had proposed to relieve the *Revenge*, *Dragon*, and *Warrior*, part of Admiral Stirling's squadron; the *Malta* and *Achille*, which have been some time in course of pay; part of Admiral Thornbrough's and the *Princess Royal*, under the same circumstances; one of Rear-Admiral Harvey's; and to have added the other ship to my own squadron, which would have brought me within one of the force of the enemy. From a long knowledge of Sir John Warren, I am of opinion he will cruise as long as his stock of water and provisions will last, the more especially if he should by accident learn of the success which the *Fame* and her associates met with by the range they took after stopping at *Madeira*. Sir John Gore, who has a most impatient spirit, will be very restless and clamorous on account of the corporal of marines he has in confinement, and the absurd conduct of his captain of marines; and I propose to send the *St. George* to relieve the *Revenge*—the more necessary because she left *Falmouth* fifty tons short of her quantity of water, and must have been some time on her ground tier. Both ships of the line and frigates stay a much longer time in port than they did when I commanded the fleet six years ago; and I understand if they send a report of their progress to Admiral Young at nine o'clock every morning no questions are asked. Any failure in this ceremony

is sure to provoke a sharp rebuke, however diligent the captain may be in essentials. The said admiral is, like Lord Barham and Admiral Gambier, a compound of paper and packthread.

I can readily account for the employment of my unworthy *élève*, from his connection with the Marquis of Bucks and Mr. Fox. He has no pretensions to any marks of favour beyond those of Edwin Stanhope or Billy Douglas. Happily for the country, he is appointed to a command whereon it is not probable he will have an opportunity to disgrace it; and he is up to the Americans in lie, trick, and evasion.

Ignorant that Rear-Admiral Louis would be on the way to relieve poor Thornbrough, in case of Sir J. Warren not arriving in due time, I named Sir Samuel Hood to Lord Howick, who cannot fix on a fitter man, and if you make a promotion it will be better still. Sir J. Warren will intrigue for a chief command on the coast of Portugal, with the circuit of the Azores, Canaries, and Cape de Verd. He wants money, and will not be contented with the small pittance likely to be the lot of a puisne flag officer in this fleet.

I hope you have disposed of Mr. Jeffrey and me, and that you will not have occasion to attend the House of Commons longer than to make a House to get through the remaining business of the session; for the constant hard work at the admiralty, when the board performs its duty, is quite enough, and in truth much more than is done at any other public office.

You say nothing of Osborne, who, I trust, is not to be abandoned. Whenever you judge my interposition upon his subject necessary, pray let me know.

With my kind love to Mrs. Markham and the

boys, and most friendly remembrances in South Audley Street, believe me to be, &c.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 17th May, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—In my last letter to Tucker I mooted my going into port when the Hibernia should come in course of payment, and I proposed running up to Spithead in a frigate. Upon reflection I think it will be better to proceed thither in the Hibernia at once, as by that means I may get back to her by the time she is filled up and paid.

Although the example I set six years ago in the best mode of cruising upon Brest has not been followed by any of my successors, and the inshore squadron has most shamefully abandoned the station assigned to it, as I will explain when we meet, I think the system is now established upon such principles it cannot be departed from, the more especially as Sir Charles Cotton (who is described as a very timid man touching rocks, shoals, &c.) has been witness to the certainty of keeping hold of Ushant in any wind or weather, by taking shelter under that island in an easterly gale, and profiting of the tides (which are so advantageous as about Scilly) in other circumstances.

The squadron before Rochfort may be supplied with water and provisions from Plymouth until the approach of the autumnal equinox. The two convoys which have been recently sent will make them hold out the month of July, before which time it will be no longer necessary to continue the squadrons off Cape Finisterre and west of Belleisle. In my judgment the squadron before Rochfort should be strengthened, for it is possible that ships may get into the Pertuis d'Antioche *malgré* the efforts of our squadron, and the tables turned upon it. These are the reveries of, &c.

I am sorry to find by the report of the master shipwright at Plymouth that the *Centaur* will not be out of his hands before the latter end of the month, so that Hood cannot be relied on to relieve poor Thornbrough. If you do not push the *Windsor Castle* she will not be here these six weeks.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 19th May, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—I thank you kindly for the support you gave to my fair fame in the House of Commons. Garlies is a sneaking cur.¹ I had much rather that he had taken the line that Canning and Perceval did, who seem to have been inoculated with the malignant venom of Pitt. I hope Lord Howick will sweep all the spiders from the navy board, or it will not do.

Hibernia, under Ushant, 22nd May, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—This captain of the *Latona* might have been a good commander of a Guinea ship, although he is neither seaman nor soldier. He told Bowen that he was sounding with his master the day before yesterday on the very rocks he run upon. I hope you will turn his ship's company over to the *Lavinia*, and when the *Latona* is repaired and manned send her to the coast of Guinea, for he is fit for nothing else. Not that I think Captain Lawford free from blame for making the *Latona*'s signal to reconnoitre Brest in such hazy weather that the long marks could not be seen; this arose from a

¹ This is merely a strong way of expressing his dislike of Lord Garlies's speech, which appears to have been the speech of one who seemed inclined to turn. They were really very good friends, and had been since the Martinique days. The friendship remained unbroken, and Lord Garlies (then Earl of Galloway) was visiting at Rochetts as late as 1817.

gossip between him and Captain Lukin, who stayed near three hours with him when he ought to have returned to me immediately, his launch and two rowing boats having been left here to assist in getting one hundred tons of water out of the *Ville de Paris*, which we achieved in four hours to a minute. I was much at a loss to account for the *Ville de Paris* having carried away her foreyard, and we learned from the lieutenants of her yesterday that it was actually done by keeping the lee fore-brace fast on tacking, and broke short by the force of the men on the weather brace in tacking. She is now shifting a fore topmast, and how the one she is lowering has been sprung is unaccountable, for we had very moderate weather and smooth water ever since she joined. The *Egyptienne* carried out five topmasts to Admiral Harvey's squadron the other day, and if we continue to throw away topmasts at this rate the forests of the north will not furnish an adequate supply. There is a great lack of seamanship in the service, and the young people now coming up are for the most part frippery and gimcrack. I wish we could revive the old school.

You must take some strong measure about Pellew, who is going the whole game at Madras. The whole race of Pellews is bad in grain; some very bad traits of the family have lately come to my knowledge.

I have ordered the *Diamond* to return as soon as she has seen the *Latona* into Falmouth or some other safe port. She sails worse than anything I ever saw, and must be new coppered when I can send her in for that purpose. Her captain is below par, and ought to go to sleep.

Hibernia, near the Black Rocks, 23rd May, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—I believe the writer of the enclosed to be a good master, and a much injured man. You will know it has of late become a maxim in naval courts-martial that the captain can do no wrong, and the onus is always laid on the master or pilot. In the case of Mr. Jenkins, he was influenced by his captain to attempt to carry the ship into St. Helen's when she ought to have kept the sea until morning, and the leadsman made a mistake in the soundings. I believe Rear-Admiral Faulknor will acknowledge this. The man is now only an acting master, although according to the best judgment I can form he ought to be restored to the place he formerly filled on the list of masters.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 26th May, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—In the mood Duckworth is he will be of no use to me, especially as I have given him my opinion that he is not entitled to a British peerage; nor is there any other officer in the service, excepting Bowen, that I can reconcile.

I see the difficulty Lord Howick is in; but a delay until I see him, the latter end of next month, cannot be of serious import.

Admiral Young must not interfere with the ships under my orders. He is a Jesuit of the first order, and, as I observed to you before, composed of paper and packthread, stay tape and buckram.

Hibernia, off Ushant, 4th June, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—There must be a great consumption of men in Admiral Young's department by desertion and the shameful manner in which the men get invalided from that infamously conducted hospital, or the Windsor Castle would have been

with me long ago. A letter goes to your secretary of this day's date requesting she and the London may be hurried; and, if you give me the Superb and Spencer, I may be able to keep up the four squadrons, *malgré* the counteractions of the captains in contriving to keep their ships in port double the time prescribed.

Pray deliver me from Captain Athol Wood, who is a very dangerous man, and I shrewdly suspect the diabolic report of the capture of the inshore squadron and my having been killed originated with him.

If an arrangement cannot be made for the continuance of old Bowen, without prejudice to him as commissioner of the transport board, I will dispense altogether with a fresh captain. My nephew is become a very competent secretary, and the parties I have to select from are swollen into such high and mighty characters I cannot and will not submit to the caprice of any of them. The decision made by Sir J. Duckworth is a great deliverance.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 8 June, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—I am well aware of the jealousy and circumvention which surrounds you, but I entreat you not to make any resolve until we meet, which will happen about the 26th instant, if my leave of absence is lodged at Portsmouth.

Hibernia, near the Black Rocks, 15th June, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—I was sure Sir J. Warren would play you a trick. He never would serve but in the best parage, and yet you have paid court to him by promoting out of the Foudroyant, to the entire neglect of the officers of the Hibernia, and thereby subjected me to the scorn and derision of

the whole fleet. The decision you have come to, of ordering him home and giving the command to Cochrane, is highly creditable, and I think he should never be employed again. Lord Howick should make a promotion to the flag, to include Stopford, by which means he will obtain three admirals much more efficient than the gentleman in question, viz. Hood, Nicholls, and Keats. Stopford is as good as Sir John.

I shall see you so very soon that I will not trespass longer upon your time than to repeat how truly I am, &c.

I expect to see Sir Charles Cotton to-morrow, and after putting him in full possession of the arrangements I have in contemplation, I shall proceed to Spithead directly.

Rochetts, 26th June, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—George Murray is the flag officer, of all others, I wish should succeed Rear-Admiral Stirling. I have many and insuperable objections to Rear-Admiral Louis, more of a private than a public nature. The Dragon is, I hope, with Stirling; and, if so, the Glory is on her passage to Cawsand Bay to replenish and be paid. I conclude the board will give the necessary orders to Rear-Admiral Murray; if not, let Tucker instruct John Parker, and direct him to send the orders here immediately to be signed.

You have done wisely to recall Popham, after his monstrous conduct.

Have the goodness to cause an order to be sent to the victualling office to supply the Hibernia with all wine, in lieu of spirits.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 13th July, 1806.

My dear Markham,—Should you not give broad pennants to Hood and Keats, or make your promotion to the flag (including Stopford) the moment parliament is up?

Hibernia, near Ushant, 16th July, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—If Lord Howick does not get rid of this vile institution of sub-lieutenants, all the youth of the service will be contaminated. The commanders of gun-brigs lord it over them, and they are soon driven out of his mess and mixed with the warrant officers, by which means they soon become professed drunkards. George Grey gave me a dreadful account of those in the North Sea, but they appear to be worse to the westward.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 18th July, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—Amidst the various occupations I have had in this busy scene—for I found the fleet in such a disorderly state that my whole time has been employed in correcting abuses and negligent slovenly habits—I have omitted to write you an account of the schooners, which are no more like Bermudian vessels than they are like Indian Praams; and if any more are built, Surveyor Rule must have nothing to do with them, but the Mudian¹ builders left to their own discretion; in fact, they are a plague and bother to all who have them under their orders.

Captain Scott, of the Dragon, has in a very satisfactory manner accounted for the deficiency of water stated in her weekly account—the clerk had omitted twenty-five tons of beer—and since her docking at Portsmouth after being on the Shambles she has stowed twenty tons less than before owing

¹ Bermudian.

to the spars they put into her. I wish Captain King, of l'Achille, may be as successful in the justification of his officers, who, it appears by the commanding officer's report at South Down, turned away two or three barges without taking out what would have supplied all her deficiencies. Captain Buller¹ has much to answer for on this subject, and Admiral Thornbrough ought to have put him under arrest for the language he held in his presence. Admiral Young has observed a profound silence, and contented himself with the bare acknowledgment of the dates of my letter.

Captain Keats has already approved himself eminently qualified for the command of a squadron and fully justified the appointment. Hood and he should have broad pennants with captains or be promoted to the flag; the latter in my judgment is fittest on all accounts, for such a barren list I never beheld. I am glad you have had a little recess at Ades² after all your fag, where I hope you found Mrs. Markham and the trio in good health.

Hibernia, near Ushant, 1st August, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—Scarce a week passes without my hearing of the ruin of one or more valuable young men, sub-lieutenants of gun-brigs. Mr. Simpson, of the Growler, who was day mate in the San Josef, and made sub-lieutenant into the Growler, is a recent instance of it; for such a wretched, squalid creature I never beheld, and Captain Ricketts assures me that a finer and better young man never existed while he served in the San Josef. You should give four boys of the second class to each gun-brig in addition to her complement; they would very soon become good seamen.

¹ Edward Buller, captain of the Malta. For a quaint anecdote about him, see *N.R.S.* xxiv. 93.

² Admiral Markham's place in Sussex.

Pray give the command of a gun-brig to Lieutenant Price the 2nd, *sur le champ*; it will oblige Nicholls, and add very much to my satisfaction.

Hibernia, in the Tagus, 31st August, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—Your first love, Mrs. Kantzow,¹ is naturally very anxious for the promotion of her near relation, Captain Grosett, who has suffered long enough for the foolish and highly impolitic union he formed with a Portsmouth miss of low extraction. I have informed her of the pledge I am under to Lord Howick. I nevertheless hope that between us he may obtain the rank of post captain.

With my kind love to Mrs. J. Markham and her flock, believe me to be, &c.

Hibernia, off Ushant, 14th October, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—I am quite astonished at the occurrences at the admiralty since the death of Mr. Fox; but I very much approve all you and Tucker have said and done, both respecting yourselves and me. I am very impatient to get into port, and as the copper sheathing of the Hibernia is in a state that will require her to go into Hamoaze, I shall have to reflect on, and digest as much as may be necessary, what has been done, and is doing, to the two men most attached to me, and whom I never will abandon.

Pray say everything kind and proper for me at Bishopthorpe, for I have such a dreadful pain in my head it is with great difficulty I am able to write this ditty, and John Parker is so much occupied in preparing the necessary orders and documents for the detached ships and your office that he must wait

¹ Miss Lucy Grosett, a first love of John Markham at Lisbon when he commanded the Sphinx in 1785. She married Mr. de Kantzow, Swedish Chargé d'Affaires at Lisbon in February 1787. In 1809 Mrs. de Kantzow came home from Lisbon and settled at Bath.

another opportunity to express the grateful sense he feels for the archbishop's kindness to him.

Pray say everything affectionate to Mrs. Markham, the boys, and infant for, &c.

Hibernia, very near Ushant, 18th October, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—The enclosed letter from Keats confirms me in the opinion I had formed that Prince Jerome is indebted to the recall of that squadron for his escape; it is by far the best position that could be fixed upon, for a squadron of six sail of the line, with a proper accompaniment of frigates, sloops, &c., will always spread the parallel of the Glenmore and Belleisle, which is the line of march of all French ships of war from the other side of the Atlantic, and I can hardly think it possible that any sea officer of experience can differ in opinion from me on this subject. A cabinet composed of landsmen may.

Let me know whether you hold on, or cut and run, for my decision will very much depend thereon.

Hibernia, in Cawsand Bay, 26th October, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—I have long been of opinion—that is to say since Captain Hurd's¹ accurate survey—that the arsenal should be transferred from Halifax to Bermuda. Churchill is the fittest man you have for master shipwright, but you must give him good appointments or you deprive him of a better thing. Whidbey is the properest person I know to direct the new works of Plymouth Sound. Sir J. Warren is a mere partisan, preferring prize money to the public good at all times. Provisions in the greatest abundance to be had in Virginia.

Berkeley is at his old tricks.

¹ Hydrographer from 1808 to 1826.

Formidable, in Cawsand Bay, 1st November, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—The enclosed very sensible letter from Captain Keats merits every attention. You really should either promote to the flag or give a captain to him and to Hood, or you will do them up before the winter is passed.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Markham and her flock, and believe me to be, &c.

I hope the archbishop and family are safe landed and in good health.

Rame House, 21st November, 1806.

My dear Markham,—The comptroller of the navy is a very weak and vain man, and you may depend upon it that Sir William Rule, who is very artful, has contrived to poison his mind against you, the Tuckers, Peake, and all who have contributed to expose the ignorance and impudence of Sir William.

Go on and prosper, and do not give a thought towards me, excepting when you have tranquil leisure.

Mr. Skottowe is so ill-tempered that the officers cannot endure him, and he is besides a very superficial, presuming man, and I will thank you kindly to remove him from the *Hibernia* and let Mr. Hendry succeed, who was in no fault for not joining the *Hibernia*, Captain Gardner having kept him against his will with a view to get an officer appointed in his room who was out of the way when the *Hero* sailed with Sir John Warren.

As you say nothing to the contrary, I flatter myself all is well in South Audley Street,¹ and at your house in the admiralty. With my kind regards to all of them, believe me to be, &c.

¹ The Archbishop of York's house.

Rame House, 26th November, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—I had a good deal of conversation with Mr. Tucker yesterday upon the state of the navy, and I very much wish that you would hear him patiently upon this subject when he arrives in town, and the best way will be either to ask him to dine with you or meet him at Ben Tucker's, for I am sure you cannot spare time or give attention to his interesting relation in a morning on account of the load of business you have to go through. He is decidedly of opinion that the *Namur* should not be sent to cruise in the western ocean at this season of the year, but that she may be safely employed about the Downs, Boulogne, or the Flemish banks. I shall therefore continue my flag on board of her in Cawsand Bay until I have the final determination of this board.

I enclose a comparative statement of the wear and tear of masts, yards, and spars between the *Hibernia* and *l'Egyptienne*, and have to remark that the spritsail yard, expended as a fore topsail yard, and one of the jibbooms of the *Hibernia* were carried away by a Danish merchant ship coming athwart hawse of us while we were moored in the Tagus, and the hand mast was spared to one of our 74's (I think the *Colossus*) to make a cross-jack yard. *L'Egyptienne* has been equally expensive during the time Captain Fleeming commanded her, and she has performed very little service; nearly half the time she has been in commission has passed in port. You shall have a comparative statement of the expenditure of sails and cordage soon.

It has blown too strong for the *Formidable* and *Monarch* to get round. They made an attempt on Sunday, but were obliged to bear up again for Torbay. I look for the *Princess Royal* every moment; when she has got a new fore yard I will

direct Sir Charles Cotton to send the St. George to Spithead.

Charles Mansfield is done up and becomes good for nothing, and in my opinion ought to be put to rest. I think my Master Codrington will be very glad to get rid of his Orion, for he hates the thing, and took ship *à la manière d'acquit*, as many others have done.

I very much want to push la Sybille before L'Orient, for Captain Durham has not means to watch that port and Concarneau.¹ If you will send an order to old Conn² he will be off in a tangent.

I am very anxious for a little moderate weather to get the Fame and Foudroyant out, for the bay will be too much crowded when the Formidable and Monarch arrive. The Ramillies ought also to proceed to Cork with a westerly wind and moderate weather. It does not appear to me that Admiral Young is aware of the hazard too great a number of ships in Cawsand Bay put the whole to. He has been too long a theorist to retain much practical sea knowledge—if he ever possessed it, which I very much doubt; but he is by far the best port admiral I ever saw.

Rame House, 9th March, 1807.

My dear Admiral,—Here is the Kent come in with a defect in her fore body, which, by Captain Rogers's description, will I fear require her going into a harbour; he is of opinion another breast hook will be necessary. None of the late contract-built ships appear to have had their fastenings properly driven and secured, which, while the overseers are selected by the surveyors upon the principle

¹ It is written 'Conquerner.'

² Captain John Conn. He commanded the Dreadnought at Trafalgar.

of patronage and favouritism, cannot be provided against. As the *San Josef* and *St. George* will occupy the artificers of Plymouth Yard, will it not be advisable to send the *Kent* to Portsmouth? Captain Rogers being an excellent man, who governs his ship with temper and judgment, consequently less liable to the ills of that port than many others. Upon enquiry I find that several of the persons in Vice-Admiral Thornbrough's long list of discharges from the *Kent* into the *Royal Sovereign* compose a reserve for Captain Garrett, who is in expectation of being appointed to a large frigate. What encouragement he may have received I know not, but I understand that his admiral and he are not likely to continue long together.

This bitter blast keeps me back sadly, and I am much worse than when you saw me last. Keep this to yourself, for if my poor wife gets hold of it she will be distracted.

Sir Charles Cotton's first lieutenant, who commanded the *Atalanta* by his orders, is said to be a steady careful officer, but I do not like his account of that sloop being left in the hands of the gunner and French pilot in so critical a situation as the *Pertuis d'Antioche*, even though one lieutenant was sick and the other had been made a prisoner, boat fighting.

I have a sad account of the management of the Nile cutter; Lieutenant Lloyd always in his cabin—sea sick, I suppose, for his former services were in the *Dart*, and he throws all the blame upon the master; in point of fact she has been of no manner of use to Commodore Keats, nor will be to any one, unless an officer who is a cutter sailor has the direction of her. Little Simmons of Plymouth would do it well.

Rame House, 21st March, 1807.

My dear Admiral,—The sooner both you and I are out of harness the better. I only wait the appointment of your new board to take my departure. Mr. Grenville will probably communicate my letter of yesterday to you, in which you will find stronger ground of disbelief of the escape of the three ships of the line and frigate from Brest.

As I hope to see you very soon I will defer the account to our meeting.

Rame House, 17th March, 1807.

My dear Admiral,—The new order of things will occasion such a delay in the refitment of ships which come in from the Channel fleet, that it will be no longer necessary for your board to refuse leave of absence to the captains, and thereby incur a considerable degree of unpopularity—I might say obloquy—in these licentious times. I state this because the *Renown* is coming in, and it is more than probable that Captain Durham, who has acquitted himself very well, will apply. You will have to calculate upon each ship requiring from a month to six weeks to perform the business which used to be done in eight days; for every block is sent to the rigging house, and the distance between Cawsand Bay and the yard is so great that the best part of the day is taken up in going backwards and forwards; disease and desertion will accumulate, and the longer the ships remain in port the more reluctant both officers and men are to leave it. From these circumstances another important question arises, which is, the many additional ships necessary to keep up your detachments; as, for example, during the last summer, when, had not the squadron west from Belleisle been withdrawn, the three ships which escaped would in all human probability have

been captured. Unless the Irish Catholics are appeased I look forward to a descent in that quarter, for I have no doubt that emissaries are at this moment employed in working up the passions of that savage people, and although I admit the difficulty to be great, we see this tiger attempting what, at any other period of history, would have been thought impossibilities, and succeeding in them too.

The wind having shifted, and the guns for your Baltic ships at this port said not to be arrived, would it not be advisable to order the ships to the eastward to meet the guns, as in all probability the Sound will be navigable very soon, and our allies will derive great encouragement from the early appearance of a British naval force?

Mortimer Street, 13th May, 1807.

My dear Admiral,—I was extremely happy to learn that you had no trouble at Portsmouth. The present ministers have, to do them justice, taken every advantage of the popular cry, now fast declining; but unless they are bold enough to shut out certain of the members of the late committee of finance in the one to be proposed, all will not do. Banks is said to have been dealt with—the reward a peerage; Canning is said to be quite desperate, and ready to undertake anything.

Marquis Wellesley and Lord Melville are spoken of as persons to be placed at the head of the treasury—one or other of them.

The Duke of Bedford brings Lord Hy. Petty into parliament, and several of the best informed members of the committee of finance will be returned.

I saw your brother Osborne yesterday, who gives a good account of the family in South

Audley Street, and is himself well and in good spirits.

My cough continues, and Lady St. Vincent very nervous, although her general health is improving. We rejoice to learn that Mrs. Markham is well and the children doing well, and with our kindest wishes to you all, believe me to be, &c.

The Saltash election took place yesterday, and Tucker embarks in the mail coach, for London, this evening. If he is not too sanguine, the two Fremantles are returned.

MEMO BY LORD HOWICK

1806.

Admiral Markham and Sir Charles Pole will be so good as to examine the papers received to-day from Sir Sidney Smith, and communicate to me their opinion upon them.

The first thing to be ascertained seems to be whether the office furnishes any documents to show the object and details of the service allotted to Sir Sidney Smith. If there is nothing of this sort to assist our judgment, and the plan was only concocted between Lord Nelson and Sir Sidney Smith, it seems to me that Sir Sidney being now under Lord Collingwood's command, nothing can with propriety be done till Sir S. has had an opportunity of explaining his views to Lord C., and the board has received his opinion upon them.

FROM SIR CHARLES POLE¹

[*Most private.*]

January 1806.

Dear Markham,—You will of course know that Mr. Grey² hath just made a proposal to me to take a seat at the board of which you are to be one. I need not say how satisfactory that would be to me if it were at all compatible in my situation to take a place below Sir Harry Neale, being a captain, if your oracle declares that to be the rule. I cannot detain the messenger, but to assure you how happy I should be to sit thus, Markham, Pole and Neale.

Yours sincerely,

C. M. Pole.

I think Sir Philip³ did say on *Cadogan's* coming to the board that the rule of always following the patent was not unalterable.

¹ Sir Charles Pole married a Miss Griffiths, first cousin of Admiral Markham.

² He became Lord Howick in April 1806.

³ Sir Philip Stephens, Bart., long Secretary to the Admiralty, on the Board 1801 and 1806.

FROM LORD COLLINGWOOD

Queen, off the Straights, April 16th, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I congratulate you on your return to the admiralty, where, with the abilities of your first lord¹ we have everything good to hope for; for although he had not been in the actual exercise of naval direction, there is, I believe, no man more perfectly informed on every subject on which the greatness of the state depends.

The convoy arrived here yesterday, and Captain Stewart² has taken the command of the Seahorse, which was (luckily for him) stationed off the light-house, and without doubt has taken your young gentleman, Hatton, with him; when the Seahorse comes to me I will enquire about the youngster and be kind to him. I cannot help being sorry that Captain Corbet³ was not confirmed; for, though I disapproved of his conduct in leaving his station, he certainly is an excellent officer in his general duty, and kept his ship in most excellent order; and I am disposed to believe that one who takes such an interest in his general duty would not have taken such a measure but from the idea that by it he was

¹ The Honourable Charles Grey, then Lord Howick, afterwards Earl Grey, first lord in the Grenville Ministry from January to September 1806, when he was succeeded by Mr. Thomas Grenville.

² Captain John Stewart, of the Seahorse, fought a very gallant action with the Turks in July 1808, and captured a 52-gun frigate.

³ Robert Corbet was a gallant but very harsh and severe officer. When in command of the *Africaine* he was mortally wounded in an action with two French frigates near Mauritius, in 1810.

best promoting the public good, and I hope it will not stand as a bar to the favour of the admiralty.

Sir S. Smith is, I dare say, a very clever man—bold and enterprising—but I confess I wish you could have found employment for him in the Channel ; his talent (from the little conversation I have had with him) seems to turn more on boats and bombs, and fire-vessels, than on the arrangement of a squadron of men-of-war—and in such employment I shall have the ships unmanned and unfit for service ; but I have given him my sentiments very fully on those subjects. I suppose the admiralty will think it proper to send me some other flag officer, for at present I assure you I consider myself but indifferently off.¹ Admiral Knight at Gibraltar is not of much aid to me, but is constantly embarrassing us with the Moors. If they did not esteem the English more than any people they would have made it a quarrel, for they had provocation. Yet he is better there than in the fleet at sea.

I beg my best respects to Mrs. Markham, who I hope is very well.

I was four months without hearing from England, so that I knew nothing that was going on relative to myself, and now I find his Majesty has been graciously pleased to settle on me a pension for the support of that dignity he has raised me to, for which I am truly grateful. I receive his Majesty's bounty to me, in the manner he is pleased to bestow it, as a high honour ; but, in settling this affair in parliament, I hear that Mr. Spencer Stanhope² took

¹ Lord Collingwood, at the date of this letter, detached Sir Sidney Smith in the *Pompée* to assist the King of Naples, and in 1807 Sir Sidney was in Duckworth's squadron at the forcing of the Dardanelles. In November 1807 he was sent to the Tagus in command of a squadron.

² Mr. Walter Spencer Stanhope, of Cannon Hall, in Yorkshire, was a well-known man in his day. He was forty years in the

great pains in having it settled (as he would call it) for the benefit of my family, for which I am not obliged to him. He was not authorised by me to higggle in parliament for a better bargain. Every man in the House could judge of my service as well as he could, and he has taken from me what I held most honourable to me, viz. to receive his Majesty's and my country's liberality to me, such as they offered it; and I have heard he did it upon the ground that, of his knowledge, my family would be left in distress at my death. In that, too, he is mistaken, because I apprehend my family are as well provided for as his own, and I think he ought not to have taken so much trouble without asking how far it might be agreeable to me. If Lord Barham had been kind enough to inform me what was the intention of his Majesty, I should have been thankful to him, and if any option was left to me perhaps I should have decided in the way it now is. But, pleading my cause without a brief, I cannot say I feel that high obligation that he may think due for it. I wish you health, my dear sir, and am, with great truth,

Your faithful, humble servant,

COLLINGWOOD.

House of Commons, with a very hospitable house in Grosvenor Square, and was a man of literary tastes as well as a master of hounds. He is one of a group of members of the Dilettanti Club in the picture painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Lord Collingwood's letter reads as if he were unacquainted with Mr. Spencer Stanhope, but this was far from being the case. Mr. Stanhope's wife was a Miss Pulleine, an heiress, whose mother, Winifred Collingwood, was a third cousin of Lord Collingwood, and inherited Collingwood property at Dissington, in Northumberland. This property descended to her second grandson, who took the name of Collingwood. A few days after Trafalgar, Lord Collingwood wrote an account of the battle to Mr. Spencer Stanhope. One of the young Stanhopes, who afterwards took the name of Roddam, served in Lord Collingwood's ship, and was very kindly treated, as a relative, by the admiral.

I have been sadly off in the miscarriage of my letters. I will be obliged to you if you will order enquiry to be made in the admiralty office for a great many stray letters.

Ocean, June 28th, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I cannot sufficiently thank you for your kind letter, enclosing one from Lady Collingwood and your offer to her to forward to me such as she may send. We were formerly but ill off in this respect, until Admiral Young was so good as to give a hint of the length of time we had been without hearing from England, while the cutters, &c., were knocking their sides together in Stonehouse Pool. Young Haultain,¹ I am told, is one of the best boys in the world, but he is a boy, and has not been kept so strictly to his duty as he should have been; he is going on extremely well with Lechmere in the Prince, and daily improving. It is a great satisfaction to me that I have got Admiral Purvis with me, who you know is an intelligent, steady officer. I was not at Gibraltar myself, but from everybody I heard of the difficulties they had to encounter there. Besides, the defence of the bay was not attended to as I think it should have been, because Admiral Knight sent the gunboats, which were there for its defence, to cruise, which they were totally unfit for and twice picked up at sea in distress, their provisions gone, and unable to reach a port.

As for the Knight of the Sword² I hope he is going on well, but since he went into the Mediterranean I am totally ignorant of everything going on there. I have not had a line from him since he left

¹ Charles Haultain did good service, in 1813, in Captain Farquhar's squadron in the Elbe.

² Sir Sidney Smith.

Gibraltar, nor has any ship returned to me that has been sent with despatches or with convoys to Malta or Sicily. I have heard from Gibraltar a report that Captain Schomberg, who was the captain of the guardship at Malta, a sort of port officer, collected the returns of the ships and is sending them to me. I have heard this gentleman is taken from his ship and station to command a flotilla—but I hope it is not so, as there has been no communication with me on the subject; that he has written to the Bey of Oran, and directed Mr. Filey (a sort of deputy-consul there) to proceed in some measures with the Algerines. I am not without apprehension that he will embroil us there and open a sore newly healed. On the whole I most sincerely wish he was at Boulogne, where he might prepare paragraphs for the newspaper every day. I have expected the *Endymion* down this month, the *Excellent* this two months, but hear nothing of them. Capel is at Gibraltar, waiting impatiently.

Jerome's squadron must come to Europe soon; they will have nothing but distress in the West Indies, and this is the point most likely for them to attempt. It is in the Mediterranean they want a squadron more than anywhere, and I shall keep the best possible look out for them, and happy day will it be.

This *Ocean* is a remarkable fine ship; in light winds sails remarkably well, in strong winds she is like other ships. I beg you will offer my best respects to Mrs. Markham, and believe that I ever am, with great regard, my dear sir,

Your obedient and most faithful servant,

COLLINGWOOD.

FROM SIR JAMES SAUMAREZ¹

Charwell,² Guernsey Road, 24th February, 1806.

My dear Sir,—In consequence of the vacancy on board the *Cerberus*³ occasioned by the death of Lieutenant Baker, I have given an acting order to Mr. Henry Maingy to serve as junior lieutenant on board of her. He is a young man of respectable connections in the island, and served with me on board the *Crescent* and *Orion* in the late war; and I shall be extremely obliged if Mr. Grey will allow the appointment to be confirmed.

Permit me to take this opportunity of most sincerely congratulating you on having assumed your seat at the admiralty board, which that you may long retain with every possible advantage and benefit to the country is my most fervent wish.

Believe me, with sincere esteem,

Yours ever most truly,

J. A. SAUMAREZ.

Guernsey, 25th August, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I hope you will do me the justice to believe that I am incapable of throwing any obstacle in the way of the public service, or of wrongfully doing or saying anything to the prejudice

¹ These letters were written in the years immediately preceding the despatch of Sir James Saumarez to the *Baltic* in command of a squadron in May 1808.

² The Charwell was Commander Philip Dumaresq's ship.

³ Sir James Saumarez had his flag in the *Cerberus*.

of any person whatever ; but the conduct of Mr. Lockwood has been such that it is not possible for me to pass it over without having it more particularly investigated, or that some mark of disapprobation shall be signified to him from the board before he is again employed upon this station. His notorious ill-treatment of Mr. Kelly, in confining him under the charge of a sergeant in a common guard-house, and the letter he addressed thereon to Mr. Marsden¹ containing in the grossest terms the most ill-founded complaints against me personally, and charges of negligence in the squadron, are of too serious a nature to be lightly passed over. The survey on which Mr. Lockwood was employed I felt particularly interested in, and upon every occasion I afforded him every assistance in my power, which he has acknowledged to me in frequent instances, and I believe he has stated the same in most of his letters. What I have to request is that Captains Dickson, Shepheard, and Dumaresq, on board whose respective ships my flag was flying, may be called upon as to the boats and other assistance supplied to Mr. Lockwood ; and Captain Dickson and Mr. Kelly (who alone were present in the conversation I had with him relative to the confinement of the latter) to testify what passed on that occasion ; and, should it appear to the board that all Mr. Lockwood's charges prove unfounded, that some mark of censure and disapprobation may be signified to him before he can be permitted to resume his employment here. I send this by Captain Hancock, for whose promotion I feel most thankful, and as he has been employed under my flag from my first coming here I shall be glad you will take the trouble to question him on the subject of this letter.

¹ Secretary of the admiralty, 1804 to 1807.

Guernsey, 6th November, 1806.

My dear Sir,—Captain Forbes has been intimated that his presence in London is required in order to undergo a second examination of his wound previous to the pension being granted him which he has been recommended to apply for to his Majesty in council; but is apprehensive that he would run the risk of being superseded from the Racehorse was he to apply for leave officially to the board. May I therefore request you will have the goodness to cause my being permitted to allow him a fortnight's leave of absence, or to inform me if he may apply without the fear of being superseded? He appears a very deserving officer, and he tells me is well known to you.

I am happy to find the late changes have not occasioned your leaving your seat at the admiralty,¹ and I remain with great regard, &c

San Josef, 10th March, 1807.

My dear Sir,—The squadron has experienced the severest eastern gales for the last three weeks with scarcely any intermission, which has rendered it impossible to keep the station off Brest, although the squadron has seldom exceeded the distance of twenty leagues to the south-west of Ushant. Last Sunday I was enabled to have communication with the inshore ships, and was extremely concerned to find that three ships and a frigate were missing from their anchorage that morning, and must have escaped, according to Captain Malcolm's report, since Friday, having been seen by the *Narcissus* on that day at the usual anchorage. One of them has a rear-admiral's flag, and was seen on the 27th under sail off Bertheaume, but returned in the

¹ Mr. T. Grenville succeeding Lord Howick as first lord.

harbour on the appearance of the squadron. The weather continues most boisterous, and notwithstanding every effort, renders it impossible to regain the station off the enemy's port.

I am sorry to say that the leak in the *San Josef* has increased from fourteen to sixteen inches an hour, and will require being inspected on her return to port.

I thought it best to give you these few lines in case the official despatches to Earl St. Vincent should not reach London so soon from Plymouth, the vessel charged with them being directed to land them at the first port.

There remain ready for sea three ships of three decks and six two-deckers.

FROM SIR JOHN DUCKWORTH

Leviathan, Port Royal, May 8, 1796.

Dear Markham,¹—Encouraged by your short letter of the 4th of January to expect a long detail of events, and what was likely to be our lot, it was an additional stimulus to the friendship I bear you to look with avidity for the February and March packets, but, alas! they bring no tidings; but as I cannot divest myself of the idea that you feel interested about those who had the pleasure of living in intimacy with you here, I take the pen to inform you that things wear nearly the same appearance as when you left us, for after having cruised above 12 weeks in hourly expectation of reinforcements, and the arrangements all laid out for landing as soon as they arrived, and Isabella Bay to windward of Monte Christi settled for the rendezvous to apportion each corps their duty, we received information that the elements had been so unpropitious to our views that nothing could be at present expected, and all our dependence to fill up the vacuum of the deceased were 2,000 men under Major-General Bowyer from Gibraltar, which arrived in excellent health, when the scheming and chaste Sir C. W. suggested an idea of directly attacking Leogane, which was to surrender the moment we appeared; however the admiral dissenting, this

¹ Captain Markham had been in command of the Hannibal in the West Indies until November 1795, when he was invalided.

scheme was for a while laid aside, and General Forbes saw the absurdity of it, till he had communicated with his predecessor, when in three days he was made a convert, and the expedition was so highly requisite, and the conquest to be so easily made, that the admiral¹ was again called upon for naval aid, which, to avoid any charge of not promoting the service, he accorded with, though with a full avowal of disapprobation. However on it went, and I first arrived at Port au Prince the day intended for its setting forth, and off we moved, with about 1,000 British under Major-General Bowyer, and 1,500 Provincials under Baron Montalembert, and on the 21st of March they were all landed without opposition, and began to move to take up their ground against the town, when the *Africa's* and *Leviathan's* signals were made to anchor, and cannonade a mud fort of 26 feet bank, and garrison entirely under cover, and which in my opinion, had it been reducible, would not have in any degree facilitated the progress of the attack of the town. However we got well placed and much within two cables' lengths, where we battered for three hours and a half, in which time the *Leviathan* fired 224 barrels of powder; but no impression appearing to be made, and my ship particularly cut up—viz. five men killed and 22 wounded,² my mainmast and ditto topmast shot through, my foremast, fore and main yards badly wounded, booms and boats shot to pieces, and hull much damaged—the admiral sent directions to haul off at dusk, which was effected, leaving two bowers and a stern cable behind us. The next morning the army discovered the place was too strong and the garrison too numerous to expect any success but at a risk greater than the object, and therefore it was decided to re-embark

¹ Rear-Admiral William Parker.

² James says 12.

them, which was performed without any annoyance, and we returned to Port au Prince to mood¹ upon our absurd indigested and blundering plan, from whence, alas! my evils were to be increased by coming here to repair my damages; which I am grieved to say in sickness and desertion are become dreadful, having lost by the former 15 and the latter 20, and my mainmast will not be ready to come off this week. Oh, Markham! well you know how to participate in the dread calamity, and will even more so when I tell you that the flower of my flock, that charming youth, dear Edward Baker, is among the dead. Good God! taken off in 24 hours! Indeed my heart is rent in pieces, and each returning day adds to my calamity. As Mr. Scott, my first lieutenant, is so ill, I fear I shall lose him, but most probably his fate will be decided before this is sealed. As I see the patriotic and virtuous General McLeod shudders at the human race being hunted down by blood-hounds, and as it seems to operate upon the feeling minds at home, I hope you who know the character of the Maroons endeavour to do away the odium, as the fact has proved it to be one of the most judicious steps possible, and has put a stop to the effusion of human blood and the total annihilation of the white race; as the great merit of the dogs were to trace out the footsteps and lead the whites to penetrate into the almost inaccessible parts of the mountains, without being destroyed by ambuscades; and when the blacks found it effected this they were glad to come to terms, and they are all at present embarked on board the Dover, 40-gun ship in the transport service, and two others, I understand to be transported to some other part of the

¹ This seems to be a verb of Sir John Duckworth's coinage.

world, but where is the rub, and the governor and assembly are quite at a loss about it, and there is an idea of keeping them embarked at Port Royal till his majesty's pleasure is known ; if so, I fear it will ultimately terminate in a way more to shock humanity than the blood-hounds. Boyles is at the Mole,¹ and well, as is Lewis. The admiral sailed from here yesterday, tolerable in health but has two sore legs. He was only here a fortnight to overhaul his rigging, and give orders respecting the convoy, which sails the first week in June under the command of Captain Hume, in the *Africa*, with the *Iphigenia* ; and Gardner wants to change with Carpenter (who is at the Mole) if it can be effected in time. Adieu, my dear sir ; may every good attend you is the cordial wish of your faithful friend and humble servant,

J. T. DUCKWORTH.

Poor Scott yet alive, thank God ! Ever yours,
J. T. D.

Leviathan, Martinique, November 10th, 1801.

My dear Markham,—Your short letter expressing the satisfaction you derived from the promotion of Fanshawe, and the pleasure produced in that amiable family, encouraged me to expect some longer epistle by the *Magicienne* ; but as she proceeded on to Jamaica without leaving such token of your remembrance (which I attribute to your multiplicity of avocations), I have only to say you are well aware that a letter from those we hold in estimation acts as a cordial upon the spirits in this detestable climate and renovates the whole frame ; therefore if your time will allow you to indulge me now and then with such a letter I shall deem it a strong proof of friendship. Could I administer similar

¹ St. Nicholas Mole in St. Domingo.

comfort, you might rely upon it I shouldn't spare my pen, but the public letters contain all that is moving here, and of late that has been little interesting. At Guadaloupe you will find there has been a recent revolution in which the people of colour have taken the lead, and by the account of Captain-General La Croke and his four aides-de-camp (who I send home with this convoy, being turned off the island in a *Dane*, and stopped by the *Tamar*) the extirpation of the whites is the order of the day; but this we must take *cum grano salis*, though I fear it is ultimately big with evil to all West India possessions. The kind interest you take in my reconciliation with my son I feel in its full force; but, my dear Markham, if parents are to reap no more from a university education and some thousands expense than I have done, they would avoid it as *Scylla* and *Charybdis*; and if George is saved from being wrecked, it is by his being removed as he was; and had it been to any other climate I should have rejoiced at his even being a soldier; but here, poor fellow! I am in continual agitation, though, thank God! he has combated the sickly season without the least indisposition; but the sad scenes that harrow up the feelings every day must produce alarm. Governor Bentinck having written me to get his plate and books conveyed in a man-of-war, I have got Captain Taylor to take charge of them; but as the governor only dates from London I fear my letter may not reach him, and venture to put it under your care to forward. God bless you, my dear Markham! and believe me, &c.

Leviathan, Martinique, November 12, 1801.

Dear Markham,—Unwilling to make any request derogatory to your consequence, yet anxious to mark the estimation in which I hold you, on receiving a

letter from the genealogist of the Order of the Bath to name three gentlemen as esquires, I signified through Mr. Baker my desire to be supported by you if consistent, and as I was ignorant how far propriety might be attached to such a request, I sought information from him.¹ I therefore cannot but feel mortified that he should so far have led me astray as to propose in my name to bring you improperly forward in the field of knight errantry, but I draw consolation from the proposal having produced laughter when you was suffering on the bed of pain, as I anxiously hope it assisted in your recovery, and that I may offer my congratulations on that interesting subject. Though we did not expect the pleasing news of peace, I rejoice most truly at the event, considering that the Marquis of Cornwallis would not be instrumental in negotiating any treaty that would diminish the honour of our country. The convoy being off St. Pierre's must plead my excuse for a hasty scrawl, and I will beg you to believe, my dear Markham, that I am, &c.

George desires his respects.

Leviathan, Port Royal, March 5th, 1802.

My dear Markham,—As far as the human mind is flattered by being honoured with a command that is deemed important by my king and country, I, of course, who aspire to such approbation, must feel flattered by the confidence reposed in me; but, my

¹ By the statutes of the Order of the Bath of 1725 each knight must have two esquires, gentlemen of blood and of coat armour, experienced in matters of chivalry. They were entitled esquires-governors. Admiral Markham, as a lord of the admiralty, could not well undertake this office for Sir John Duckworth. But his ancestor Robert Markham, then aged 17, was esquire-governor to Lord Lumley in 1553, at the coronation of Queen Mary, and wore the beautiful costume prescribed by the statutes.

friend, as I am not arrived to the pitch of Gil Blas's archbishop to believe my homilies improve as I grow older, I fear lest I should (though unintentionally) betray the judgment of those who have done me the honour to repose such confidence in me ; and certainly I cannot say I am one who would have volunteered such an undertaking, but whilst in it my duty and inclination will stimulate me to do my best. But as many of my brethren covet this command, and those who have a friendship for me at the admiralty will allow my mind has been long enough upon the stretch, I trust they will view me, in time of peace, solicitous to perform those duties by my family which I have unavoidably neglected. Besides, Markham, *entre nous*, this command with a fleet of 17 sail of the line, and seven more hourly expected, must, at the enormous expense every article of life is, be ruinous to a small fortune. As I shall rejoice at the events which promote your happiness, let me beg you to accept of my sincere congratulations on the birth of your son, and also on your possessing a seat in the senate.¹ Believe me, you have my warmest wishes to enjoy health to see the boy brought up, and to employ your talents for our country's weal. Whether I shall ever have the pleasure to participate of the hospitalities of your fireside at the country villa you are in pursuit of, time only can develop. You will, I am convinced, be sorry to see by my public letter of this date that the seeds of mutiny are not eradicated from the British fleet, and that in consequence I have had a painful task to go through, which I hope will have the desired effect. As the squadron your board has put under my command calls forth all my attention, I have as yet visited the pen but once,

¹ Elected member for Portsmouth on November 12th, 1801.

and paid my money, 800*l.* sterling, for furniture, carriages, &c. I shall therefore thank you, when any admiral is appointed to relieve me, if you will acquaint them that, except a close carriage, harness, saddles, bridles, bed, and table linen, with glass and crockery ware (to make up for breakage), nothing will be wanting. As you will know officially all I can collect about the movements of the French at St. Domingo, I will only add my cordial good wishes for your health and happiness, begging you to believe that I am, with real regard, dear Markham, &c.

Assure Troubridge of my regard. Ever yours,
J. T. D.

Leviathan, Jamaica, May 15th, 1802.

My dear Markham,—Your friend Colonel Lethbridge presented me with your kind introductory letter, and though I knew him a little before, I think when you next meet you will then know that any person you are interested about must have a place near my heart. Your letter of the 28th of March covering one to Captain Otway reached me yesterday, and as the Edgar had been previously detached from the squadron for England, I return it through you, and as for Sir John Colpoys' friend Mr. Martin, he is unluckily returned also, otherwise either of you taking any interest about him would have ensured him my best endeavours. It affords me pleasure to find my daughter has such perfection in your eyes ; and as my beauty is on the wane, I am gratified to find you think I shall leave a sample of what I was. I am obliged by your enquiries for George ; he is General Nugent's aide-de-camp, and I believe, now moved from that sink of iniquity, the university, he will resume his former

good character.¹ Villaret's correspondence and my reply you will have officially seen, and I trust approve; I think St. Domingo will afford some amusement for 50,000 or 60,000 of Bonaparte's Invincibles, and will not be quickly terminated. At present the weather is hotter than I can describe; everything burnt up, and not a drop of rain since I arrived. God bless you! I hope your sweet little boy is likely to be the image of his father, and Mrs. Markham in a state to make another, and I am, my dear Markham, &c.

Leviathan, Jamaica, October 2nd.

My dear Markham,—As there is no pleasure in exile equal to the knowing our friends are in the enjoyment of the blessings of this life, your kind letter of the 25th of July therefore proved highly grateful to my feelings, and as you have entered into the purchase of a place, and hold what I call a large farm for a gentleman in your hands, I hope from my heart your agricultural abilities may be productive of bringing profit, and health. Probably I may hereafter ask you for a lesson, though I fear I should not sufficiently emerge from sea ideas to prove worthy of being your pupil; but if not, I may make some interest with you and Mrs. Markham by being a good playfellow for your boy, who I trust will grow up to promote both your happinesses. The friendly concern you express about my son I am truly sensible of; unluckily he was left to be his own master at a period when he was not sufficiently ballasted to keep him upright. However, with all his foibles, I have good ground to think his heart is not perverted, which encourages me in the hope that all may yet go right. When you are spoke of

¹ He was killed at the battle of Albuera.

he is certainly not unmindful of the friendship you have conferred on him, and always begs his respectful regards may occupy a part of my paper. As in my official detail of public news you have the pith of my knowledge and information, I shan't enter into repetition, as it was ever a dull day at school. But I will tell you what will make you stare, and me poor—that upon summing up the 8 months' expenses in this island, the house of Willis and Waterhouse have made clear to me I have spent 2,154*l.* sterling, not including the purchase of any liquors; therefore ruin must ensue, my friend, and mum seems to be so much your text that you don't even hint when you expect we may meet in old England; but whenever anybody is named for my successor I shall be obliged to you if you will find out whether he will take my beds, chairs, tables, horses, chaises, &c., &c., &c., at an appraisement; if not, I should like to take time by the forelock and sell all before his arrival. As poor Mr. Bonie's state has for some time been a melancholy picture of what the finest talents may be reduced to, I don't think his death is to be lamented, and in the disposal of his property I give him credit for having died as he lived, acting wisely. As I don't know where to address my pleasant second, George Campbell, I shall cover his letter under your public situation, and beg you to forward them. It affords me real pleasure to find Lord St. Vincent's health so much mended; if it keeps pace with my wishes it will soon be perfect, and long continue so. If you mention me to Mrs. Markham, you may assure her of my regard, believing me, my dear Markham, &c.

P.S.—Lethbridge dined with me yesterday, and requested me to remember him to you. Yours ever, J. T. D.

Echo, Port Royal, July 2nd, 1803.

My dear Markham,—Before I received your letter of the 25th of April, the die was, alas! cast for war; I therefore fear that you will be excluded even from your Sunday's walk, and find more opposition to set afloat the bile than could arise in peace; but honours, my friend, we are aware, are not exempted from the assassin's tongue; you must therefore shield yourself under conscious rectitude, and bid defiance to slander. This is the maxim I now adopt, and when the heat of this d——d climate will allow me to sleep I do it very comfortably; how much more ought you to do it, my friend, encircled with every domestic comfort, which I have been long precluded from, but this wound I trust you will never experience. My public letter of this date will tell you we have commenced seizing and detaining, and in *la Mignonne* I assure you we have apparently the finest corvette I ever saw, originally built to carry long 24-pounders, but on her coming out to St. Domingo the captain informs me he requested to have eighteens, ten of which are mounted, and eight she left at Aux-Cayes. I have ordered her to be surveyed and valued, when I have no doubt she will be thought worthy of purchase, and I hope we shall soon have more to offer at that market; though the movements of the French stagger me, as they must either go to Cape François for the purpose of evacuating, or to wait reinforcements to strike some great blow. But as our squadron is off there it must soon be developed, and whatever may be the intention of that diabolical nation, we will do all in our power to counteract them, for in such a game who would not endeavour to play their best? The Cumberland being expected every hour, I will take care to fulfil your present wishes about Mr. Wade, though in looking over your letters, and my book of those

recommended for promotion, I don't find him mentioned with that view. Adieu! Accept every kind wish for a continuance of Mrs. Markham's and your two boys' good health, believing me, &c.

Shark, Port Royal, December 21, 1803.

My dear Markham,—Environed by French prisoners, and persecuted by the insolence of two overbearing generals, Rochambeau and Brunette, who out-Herod Herod, you must allow it to plead my excuse for referring you to my public letters for the events of this last month. I have delivered McDonald his letter under your cover, and put him to act as captain of the Port Mahon. Lieutenant Croft also I have removed from the Camel to Hercules; and when I have their lordships' permission to take the prizes into the service, of course one you are interested about cannot be forgot. Though I feel confident what must be the result of the threatened invasion, yet that cannot lull to sleep the anxiety for all that is dear to an Englishman; therefore I am looking for the November packet with avidity. Should this country be free from alarms, and it would be consistent in war to visit my native clime, I should rejoice to be there in summer; but if the Spaniards are lugged into the scrape, the abundance of Frenchmen settled on Cuba will make it a dangerous neighbour, and I must be content with remaining as long as my constitution can hold out, which has ample at present to give it a shake. I hope Mrs. Markham and your children enjoy health, and that they may long live to be blessing to you. My son is just recovered from the fever; this, alas! has been a trying moment. Remember me with great regard to Thomas Troubridge, and believe me, my dear Markham, &c.

Shark, Jamaica, March 25th, 1804.

My dear Markham,—I wrote you by the packet of the 12th instant that I had availed myself of the first vacancy, after Lieutenant Croft¹ returned into port from our unsuccessful attempt on Curaçoa, to place him in a situation as commander of the *Vigilant*, a charming brig, where I have little doubt you will be able to secure him. *Le Duquesne* sailed from hence on the 22nd, with 20 sail under convoy, and I understand they were yesterday as high as the east end, but took shelter under Rocky Point in consequence of a fresh north. I will thank you to forward the enclosed, and with every good wish for Mrs. Markham and your children, I am, my dear friend, &c.

Shark, Jamaica, June 16th, 1804.

My dear Markham,—The French commodore Barré having conducted himself with much propriety as a prisoner since his arrival from the Cape, and being mentioned as an opponent to all Rochambeau's cruel proceedings, I feel interested that he should not be confined in the same place with that general, and I shall be thankful, when an exchange takes place, if you will direct he may have the advantages of it among the first, and be shown every attention that can be consistently with his situation. You will have heard by our friend Captain McDonald the melancholy event that has befallen my valuable friend Baker's charming youth ; what will be the effect of it upon his parents God only knows ! My heart bleeds

¹ William Croft, of the Crofts of Stillington, in Yorkshire, was born April 2nd, 1782. He was a midshipman in the *Centaur* with Captain Markham, who continued to watch over his career and further his interests for many years afterwards. He was overjoyed at getting command of the *Vigilant*, and wrote a most grateful letter to Captain Markham. He was not employed after 1815, became a retired admiral, and died in 1871 at Stillington.

for them ; and I am unpleasantly unhinged, which will plead my excuse for brevity, and with every good wish for Mrs. Markham and your dear little ones, I am, my dear Markham, &c.

Superb, near Cadiz, May 1st, 1806.

My dear Markham,—Having painfully felt for some years that the friendship which I had hoped would cease only with our existence had most unaccountably vanished, the renewal of it by your truly friendly letters of the 23rd of March and 19th ulto., taking a kind interest in my success¹ and misfortune, has revived in me the expectation of a continuance of it, and I can confidently assert, however the error may have arisen, the removal of it has been truly gratifying to me, and a great relief in my present misery, private and public, as I must acknowledge I was not prepared to meet either of them, and the accident of my beloved George's required all my powers to support with manliness, without the addition of being degraded by his Majesty's ministers, and my feelings wounded beyond description, that I am now qualified only for retirement. As I trust it will not be long ere we meet, when I shall feel comfort in the opportunity of assuring you that my regard and friendship towards you never has, nor never will, vary, but you will always, my dear Markham, find me, &c.

P.S.—I am just anchored, and always sincerely yours, J. T. D.

Superb, May 18th, 1806.

Dear Markham,—Just as I was moving on shore released from my imprisonment, her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales did me the honour to let me

¹ Duckworth's successful action off St. Domingo was fought on February 6th, 1806.

know she was at breakfast on board the Centaur, where I went and continued till six o'clock ; therefore had not your kind letter of the 15th till I got to my cottage, which will account for my not answering it by the same post, and as I shall see you I hope on Wednesday, though I entirely lose this day by her Royal Highness having signified her intention of visiting the Superb, which prevents me from doing any of my own business here, and will plead an apology for hastily saying God bless you !

My son and daughter kindly thank you for your obliging recollection.

Stoke, June 20, 1806.

Dear Markham,—Having come post *via* Bath, and stopped at my house near Exeter for two days, I did not reach home till Wednesday, when of course my attention was soon called to Royal George, where, alas ! my disappointment was great in finding that out of the Britannia's ship's company only 150 men of all descriptions were turned over, and that not even a sailmaker or any of those essential petty officers from the establishment of a ship are among those. I therefore rely upon your friendship in having something good in store, and that of course you will give me the men of the Britannia, which I understand are lent to the prizes that Lord Northesk brought home, and am told they are now to the eastward. The marines also are very essential, and most particularly so in a flagship. I consequently am to request you will allow the small party which were disembarked from the Britannia to make a part of the Royal George's, to enable us to get on with the raw and inexperienced recruits ; and as Lord Howick said he would lay a good foundation from that ship, though I could not have all her

crew, I trust to your kindness to take care of me, and as you are well acquainted with all that is needful to effect that object, I shall only say that I shall be much obliged, and you will not find me unmindful of any attention you may favour me with. It is with pleasure I inform you that my son is now so nearly recovered that I think there can be no apprehension of any latent evil from the accident. He, with Mrs. King, beg to unite in best compliments to you and Mrs. Markham, with every good wish for your dear children, and I am, dear Markham, with real regard for you and yours, &c.

Plymouth Dock, June 22nd, 1806.

Dear Markham,—Having already written you of my mortification respecting the few of the *Britannia's* people discharged into the *Royal George*, I should not again enter upon a similar subject till I had been favoured with your sentiments, had not Admiral Young informed me he was directed to give the preference to the *Sampson* and *Lavinia*, and that 90 landsmen which had been lent from the *Salvador* must be sent to those ships; thus are we deprived of the little assistance we had received, and add to this the few old marines of the *Britannia*, in number about 40, will go to those ships, and I shall have nothing but recruits who never mounted a yard. I consequently hope from your friendship that that will not be admitted to take place. I also beg to point out to you that there are in the *Alexander* a boat's crew which I indulged Captain Impey with, and I should thank you to let it be turned over to the *Royal George* when that ship is cleared. The same thing applies to the seven men named in the enclosed list which were in the *Brave*¹ with Captain Bowyer, and are now in the *Donegal*, if you

¹ A French prize taken in the action of February 1806.

can allow me to have them. Having only a moment to save post, you will excuse a hasty scrawl, and believe me, dear Markham, faithfully and sincerely yours, &c.

Stoke, June 25th, 1806.

Dear Markham,—From the present state in which the Royal George is armed she is not equal in number of guns to any of the 98's, and the builder assures me that in point of strength she is equal to any ship in the navy ; and as most, or all, of our first-rates have carronades upon the poop (the utility of which I have so recently experienced), I cannot help being much mortified at the negative the admiralty have put to my request to allow that ship to be fitted for them ; but as I am not inclined to enter into reasoning with the board after such a determination, as it may appear improper, I therefore should be obliged to you if you could alter this resolution. As at present, her poop will be entirely useless in point of defence, for I am sorry to say the marines recently embarked are recruits which know not the use of a musket ; therefore I am convinced you will admit of the necessity and propriety of carronades, should circumstances enable an enemy to place himself on the quarter. I am to thank you for your letter of 22nd, but, alas ! Salvador del Mundo has none of the petty officers of the description you allude to, and however Admiral Young may be inclined to assist me, he is very delicate in disposing of a single man without its being pointed out by the board ; therefore if you can't aid me, I must submit to the same lot as a private captain, whilst, my friend, I can see junior admirals placed in first-rates fully manned, and glad should I have been to have taken Thornbrough's ¹ leavings ; for well you know what

¹ Admiral Sir Edward Thornbrough.

a labour it is to organise a ship full of landmen recruits, and that the utmost exertions cannot effect it so as to enable her to do justice to the country and an officer's character within a year; but as a word to the wise is sufficient, I will not further intrude upon your time, but beg you will believe me to be, with real regard, dear Markham, &c.

Royal George, Cawsand Bay, September 12th, 1806.

Dear Markham,—Having with the indulgence of Admiral Young been at Lord Eliot's, I received your letter too late to avail myself of yesterday's post, but I should feel myself very remiss was I to omit expressing the sense I have of your attention in communicating what is probably to be my lot, and what still heightens that attention in my feelings is that I have not been recently accustomed to it. I am, dear Markham, &c.

Royal George, at Sea, January 16th, 1807.¹

Dear Markham,—As the admiralty despatches from Lord Collingwood received previous to the departure of the squadron from Plymouth on the first of this year will have freed you from the embarrassment you allude to in your obliging letter of the 21st of November respecting his lordship's movements, it did not become my department to see the instructions of your board, which arrived by it

¹ In November 1806 the quarrel of the Porte with Russia and England commenced, and Lord Collingwood sent Sir Thomas Louis, in the *Canopus*, and the *Endymion* (Captain Bladen Capel) to Constantinople to bring away British subjects. Louis returned to Tenedos, leaving the *Endymion* at the disposal of Mr. Arbuthnot, the British ambassador. Sir John Duckworth was given command of a squadron to attack Constantinople and bring the Turks to terms. He found Lord Collingwood off Cadiz, left him on January 12th, and this letter was written the day before he arrived at Gibraltar.

on the 12th instant, but before the close of yesterday I was put in possession of his lordship's orders drawn upon them ; and upon perusal they appear to combine most momentous and arduous service, to execute which every exertion of mine will be used, and if the head is able, the heart is correct. But the magnitude of the undertaking may eventually require abilities which my vanity won't allow me to attach to myself ; yet I will endeavour to make up by honest zeal, and what can be done shall be done for the good and honour of our best of monarchs and the country. Yet to a friend I may say, did I not repose great confidence in the exalted mind of Mr. Grenville, I should fear that my subordinate situation (with want of interest) may be urged again as a pretext for my not receiving that remuneration which has been uniformly, since the 1st of June, bestowed upon my brethren, frequently for far inferior services ; but, alas ! this is a sore subject which has produced many a restless night, though I endeavour to draw consolation in having deserved better from those in power.

On the subject of the *Orion's* being sent home, I did not know the intention till within four hours of her leaving the squadron, and the only reason I have ever heard assigned, and that from common report, was that her stern and stern-post were completely rotten, besides being so weakened by the action as to render her unsafe at sea.

As I never can feel higher gratification than in economising for the good of our to be admired country, I shall have pleasure to contribute my mite in the investigation you desire as to the means of procuring and the prices of naval stores in the Mediterranean, and whether they are to be got at all, the result of which you shall know. The *Ajax* having just completed her fitting at Gibraltar, and the

Windsor Castle and Repulse having preceded me for the same purpose, and to complete provisions, I expect to find them nearly ready on my arrival there to-morrow, and as there is no water in the tanks I shall not be long in doing all I have to do, when I am to proceed to Palermo and take Sir Sidney Smith—I hope without delay, as I shall despatch the Ajax to prepare him for my arrival. I am then to water at Malta, having 180 tun now empty, and I shall after push on with ardour for the goal. Lord Collingwood having informed me the Thunder bomb is in too feeble a state to throw shells, I much wish the bomb you mentioned as coming may arrive to-morrow, as I think she may be very essential for our operations. Many thanks for your intentions to communicate to Duckworth and his Penelope at Guernsey the opportunity that was likely to offer for writing. They both speak of the kindness, and, as young folks ought to be, appear to be among the happiest of the happy. I am, dear Markham, &c.

Royal George, off Candia, April 4th, 1807.¹

Dear Markham,—In consequence of your suggestion that it might probably tend to economise for the public if a depôt of naval stores could be provided within the Mediterranean, I have not failed to give it my consideration, and to make every possible enquiry on the subject. But the fact is the orders you placed me under, though I had arrived at Constantinople, as therein inferred, without molestation, were the preparation for shutting the door of such

¹ Duckworth entered the Dardanelles with his squadron on February 17th, returning after suffering heavy loss from the forts in the Dardanelles on March 3rd. Meanwhile troops in thirty-three transports, under General Fraser, had been sent from Messina and took Alexandria on February 21st. Duckworth, with part of his squadron, arrived there on the 22nd of March.

sources, as the Black Sea is the chief situation from which they can be drawn to any extent for men-of-war. Few, I understand, might have been got in the Adriatic and Gulf of Venice, but the Russians have an armament in those neighbourhoods which swallows up all that, and they are repeatedly making applications for stores, naval and military, from our arsenals at Malta ; but not having received any directions from the commander-in-chief on that head, I shall have no hesitation in courteously negating such applications till they arrive ; for I conceive in your official situation you have had proofs of the rapacity of the Russians when an opening of that nature is given, and our supplies are so scanty at Malta, that I hear much of distress for a variety of articles among ourselves ; but as I trust you have not forgot the good of the king's service is my polar star, I endeavour to soften real evils, and to draw forth all the resources we have amongst us, which, since our two actions in forcing the Dardanelles, have been fully employed. And truly may I assert never have my feelings had such trials as under my recent instructions, evidently drawn out upon information in which a war between Russia and the Porte, brought on impolitically—I might almost say madly—by the former, and the necessity of our minister's removal from Constantinople, could not have been in contemplation ; for the most fortunate event that could have arisen under such circumstances, with a whole empire prepared, would have been to have negotiated the dismissal of that type of his infernal master, Sebastiani ; but in this the elements combined against me. I therefore, though chagrined at not commanding success, rejoice at my good fortune in having a squadron still so effective, as much I think will be required of it this summer ; however, having called at Alexandria, where our

troops had, in consequence of my letter to General Fox, preceded me five days, and got possession, I thought it right to leave Sir Thomas Louis¹ with half my force to see the army completely established, and to assist with the boats of the ships to take Rosetta, which the general represented to me as indispensably necessary to obtain supplies. As I think it likely Sebastiani may employ his ingenuity in fabricating some story to pass on to India upon the unfortunate burning of the Ajax,² as also upon Bonaparte's successes, which he made them believe in Constantinople had happened in Poland, I have desired Sir Sidney Smith to write to his acquaintance, Mr. Barker, consul-general, and agent for the India Company, at Aleppo; and to send him a bulletin of the glorious battle of the 26th of December near Pultusk,³ also of our being at Alexandria, &c., &c., and to request he will forward the news to India. I also conclude from my conversation with Major-General Mackenzie Fraser⁴ that he will have caused Major Missett, our India agent, to convey the same news from Alexandria. Now my greatest solicitude is for Sicily, where I am hastening under a pressure of canvas with Royal George, Pompée and Repulse, to counteract the intrigue of the French party at that vicious court, and I trust all will go right. But when I

¹ Sir T. Louis died on board the Canopus on May 17, 1807.

² A fire broke out in her cockpit on February 14, 1807, off Cape Janissary, the flames spread, she drifted on shore on Tenedos and blew up. Of 633 souls on board only 381 saved themselves by swimming. The captain, Blackwood, was saved.

³ In this battle Napoleon defeated the Russians and forced them to retreat behind the Pregel. A different version seems to have reached Sir John Duckworth.

⁴ General Fraser was killed soon afterwards in an attack on Rosetta, which was repulsed. The troops then evacuated Egypt, in September 1807.

FROM SIR JOHN DUCKWORTH 101

view what I have had to do, and what the present state of affairs in the Archipelago, Adriatic, &c., &c., require, it is not in nature for any officer acting a secondary part to proceed with the necessary energy, and it can only be done by the man in chief command, who has the power to reward and punish, and on whom the merit or demerit of the service must wholly fall.

If I can execute anything for you in this country you will signify it, and with best wishes for Mrs. Markham and your family, believe me to be, dear Markham, &c.

FROM LORD KEITH

At anchor off Alexandria, June 13th, 1801.

My dear Markham,—I give you many thanks for your letter by the Spider, and am very happy such a man is where you are; God grant you health to hold it, and do the duties required. I rejoice your excellent father is so well. I must ever regard, and deeply so, all the family; pray remember me to them. This expedition is a mill-stone about my neck; it is so spun out, and indeed I see no end to it. This fleet is in a wretched way for ships and men—all short, and scarcely half British. I am, with great truth,

Dear Markham, yours,

KEITH.

I have fallen under the displeasure of your friend Captain Martin, who, I am told, thinks I am concerned in peculation; but as it is not so, I endeavour to console myself.

Sheerness, May 24th, 1803.

Dear Markham,—Lord St. Vincent with me seemed to think a little three-decker like the *Barfleur* a more handy ship, and drew less water than the *Kent* or many of the 74-gun ships, but any ship which is most convenient to your board will answer me. The *Monarch's* apartments are very small indeed, which is a consideration. I have been

examining men and charts, and think when the outfit is a little over I must go to Westgate Bay, where I shall be in the way of receiving your orders near the enemies' coast and in the mouth of the Thames. It appears the best situation, being near the Downs, until the Dutch get a fleet ready ; then perhaps Yarmouth may become more essential ; in the meantime from the Swale to Beachy seems highly important. I am very sincerely, &c.

Sheerness, June 6th, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I am now ready with the plan for fixing the block ships, gun-brigs, &c., and when you send me the signals established last war between the ships and signal posts, I will add any I think requisite and send up. There are no cutter's signals here, and you know nothing under the rank of commander gets signal books, so pray make them send some. I am much, &c.

There was not water to let the Utrecht out of dock to-day. Cerberus has got the men and orders ; l'Egyptienne is quite ready for orders. Lapwing in two days will be off.

22nd June.

Dear Markham,—I send this by Lieutenant Murray, who inclines to get into a frigate to the West Indies or Mediterranean ; perhaps you can recommend him to the commander-in-chief or put him into the ship of him who may go to the East or West Indies to command-in-chief ; but if nothing can be done I will take him with pleasure, and you may give him a commission ; the family are much to be lamented. I thank you for the pursers ; I had written to Durham about them, and am, &c.

26th June.

I am very glad young Murray seems in a way to get on; I respect the family much and I fear they are ill-off. I hope Lake will soon be promoted, the prince is very desirous he should. His father went to the prince at the time the archbishop did, and is now the oldest servant he has. I have sent him to the *Blanche*. Orders are out to waylay the convoy, which I hope will be productive.

Dear Markham,—I am much obliged by the appointment of Mr. Fernandes to the *Speedwell*, which is not a name well adapted to this place, where we seem to do but little in the repair way. I hardly know what to think of this 70 sail off Shetland, unless they are fishers. I have letters from Thornbrough; he describes things just as they were in the ports. I have a terrible account of the *Monarch*—sails dreadfully, and leaky as a sieve. The *Ruby* is out, and shall go to Thornbrough to let in some of the unpaid.

6th July.

In answer to the express the orders are given. Sir Neil may not be correct, but we must give him credit. I have presumed to add the *Seine* to the number because I do not know the force of the enemy, real or supposed, and I shall put something in her place until she can return. The *Melpomene* is in sight, *Penelope* in Yarmouth Roads. Pray, my dear friend, do something about the cutters; they give much trouble about men, and as we look after them they do not choose to come here to be examined.

Sheerness, July 7th, 1803.

Dear Markham,—Defence is full manned and well, all but marines; of such we have none—that

is, she has 50. Monarch is equally ready and has 30 marines ; wants one day's job to the rudder. Le Seine is ready, they only wait being paid. The clerks are at Chatham paying the yard. The Dutch flag of truce says De Winter was expected in Holland by way of Paris. L'Africaine has not returned ; Leda is still with Thornbrough ; Amelia went to Yarmouth for her men, sent in the Dutch hoys, so I have in fact nothing off Helvoet, and have sent the Ambuscade there, and the Gelijkheid from the Downs. It is our business to be in a state of preparation, but I see no possibility of the French being able to remove a number of men capable of alarming this country for some time to come. Nothing you write me shall at any time transpire.

It is only two days since a fleet started for the Baltic, and here is another call upon me, near thirty sail, and nothing large enough here but the Seine or Defence. Convoys should be ordered to collect here or at Yarmouth, and when all gathered then sail.

27th July, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I am again applied to by Sir D. Dundas and Sir James Craig about the additional signals of communication. The latter writes me from the Horse Guards, and says they have not yet been sent to the Duke of York or I should have heard of them here. He proposes I should meet him at Chelmsford or Colchester on Thursday. Thornbrough has been long out and has nothing on board. I think he may come to Yarmouth in a frigate and leave the command to Hope ; Gardner would not do well. A resident officer at Yarmouth is much wanted. I have received, by express, orders to block the Weser. Only two printed copies ; pray

tell the clerks on such occasions to send more printed copies, it takes an infernal time to make out so many manuscripts. No lieutenant for the Flirt cutter.

I think the substance of Lieutenant Sibrell's information of the way in which the French treat the Dutch is worth making public.

6th August, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I have a letter from Fleeming saying he has an acting purser, Mr. Jennings, who he is very desirous of serving, and wishes him appointed to the ship if the present purser is removed. If it can be done, he and I will be obliged to you.

What a pity Bonaparte was not taken in the brig!

9th August, 1803.

Dear Markham,—It seems odd that Craig should write that the coast was ill defended. I gave him a list of the vessels and stations, with which he appeared perfectly satisfied, and what passed respecting gun-boats is before the board on my report on returning from the visitation of the coast. A greater number of row-barges might be of use in calms, but how are they to be protected and manned? I do not know how the purser of *l'Egyptienne* came absent, but I imagine Jennings to be his clerk who is doing the duty, but this is surmise only.

I do not believe any of them have got to windward of me in number or quality. I believe some are better off than they pretended to be at starting.

I am almost certain Captain Mackenzie is right and Cheyne wrong, because his three last returns correspond. I cannot get weekly returns from Sir Sidney nor official answers to any letters. I have written very sharply on the subject. I have written Lord St. Vincent in behalf of that imprudent man Newhouse, and consider Captain Seater not a whit better for permitting his absence.

I think the York very slack and the Camel too.

12th August.

Dear Markham,—The exact orders I have received to-day respecting the destruction of the Frenchmen had been given, but not as a published order, but which I think highly proper, and will of course circulate instantly. I write you respecting barges in Essex, which has the means of defence far beyond any other part of the kingdom within itself, which is not the case on the Kentish coast. Thus I think the army will be satisfied. I am not of opinion that [it] is requisite to defend more than the mouths of the rivers, but if the barges belonging to the rivers are ready to come out to the Thames or Wallet, they are certainly well suited and very formidable, because they can cross all the sands which are not actually dry.

Margate, 31st August, 1803.

Dear Markham,—We have information by different vessels that there is a three-deck ship fitting for sea at the Isle of Aix; when ready she must drop down to Basque road and there might be got hold of. No one knows the place better than Lord St. Vincent, who anchored there in the Gosport when I was with his lordship some years ago.

October 11th, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I hope soon to be able to answer your questions respecting anchoring off the Dutch and Flemish coast, because I had given directions to investigate that point. When I see Bligh's plan I shall be able to judge better, but I am inclined to think the ships will be as well at their anchorage, the little ones within the Bray shoal excepted. Flushing, I think, I can watch with cruising ships. Ostend to Dunkirk is difficult, the sea is narrow and dangerous in long nights. I have the York off Beachy to quiet minds. By the way, I see a riot stirring up at Edinburgh by the judges, &c., about the defenceless state of the coast; the fact is, all the law is in the interest of Lord Melville, and, of course, not well inclined to the present government, but the answer is plain—Where is the expedition to come from? The Texel has a force before it, the Elbe and Weser the same, besides the ice will soon render those preparations nugatory. It is certainly to be wished that all the coast was in safety, but that is not in nature.

October 13th, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I have sent the Swallow cutter to the Ness to attend the Venus; any other help shall be afforded. I am obliged by your letter. I have cast my eye over the long instruction for defence, and so soon as the post goes off I shall take it into consideration, but it seems as if there is little if anything to alter excepting from change of circumstances, which no general plan can embrace, but must be acted upon as they present themselves. I am glad something is going to the north, although they had no immediate cause to complain. A flag officer is certainly wanted, and the remark of

Troubridge is just—they are difficult to be found ; I know none but Græme, Patton, Whitshed, Knight. You must make some of yourselves. We, the old, wear out. I am soon going to a house nearer the Downs, and from which I see over the Thames at the same time, and I keep a boat constantly ready in Ramsgate and Margate to take me into the river or the Downs if wanted at Deal ; too frequently it is impossible to embark at all.

15th [? October].

Dear Markham,—I think the best way of sending the combustibles would be in the fire-ship *Zephyr* ; no one would have any idea about their being sent there for any purpose but her own equipment.

The weather is quite shocking of late. Patton has made an alarm in the Downs. The day before yesterday the wind was SE and smooth water ; the gale had forced most of our ships into the Downs. I sent a dragoon to desire he might send all the cruisers off, and in such weather be attentive to signals, &c., &c. This he construes into immediate approach, and fires away night signal to prepare for battle. Consequently, up hammaccoes, and bulkheads pulled down. Truly ridiculous.

I send you a letter from a very good man, Bishop, who you know was my messmate when the Duke of Clarence was with me in the Warwick. If the man is what he states, will you set him afloat ?

The mud dock at Sheerness has been taken up by the Favorite sloop since the month of May last, and I understand little done to her ; were they to plank up the bottom and turn her out it would give us the use of the dock at this busy time.

24th, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I wrote Captain Morris about the well. If Deal is supported by the hills behind it with water, it cannot be difficult to convey it by spout and hose to the back of the surf, where boats could come to receive it into the casks. I had written to the same effect to Admiral Russell, adding that tenders had already been ordered to be disarmed. The order you mention about reckonings is printed and put up in all the offices, but in all the squadrons and in ships I ever commanded I had them regularly detailed before two o'clock; but what you observe of officers not studying pilotage and failing to provide books and maps is too much the case. Master, carry me here or there. This used not to be the case, so that I can hardly get them to go from the Downs to Spithead without a pilot. Cromarty cannot be defended by ships alone. I understood there were forts on each head, but I have ordered Captain Adam to look at it and report, and then go on the coast of Moray.

This Scots spy I suspect will turn out to be a smuggler, landing to give notice to the boats to go off and 'work the crop,' as it is termed. The want of sloops is a constant complaint. I am surprised it is so, considering there is a great charge on them at the office.

26th October.

Dear Markham,—Your old pilot has just been here; I conversed with him, but he does not seem to approve of a continued anchorage off Flanders; indeed, it is a vile place. I look for Captain Bligh's return any day; he has good people with him which will lead me to decide. The Dungeness

barges shall be marked if necessary, and notice sent you. By a letter this day from Captain Hotham he is much pleased with the anchorage. If Boney had intended to come he never had such weather as for three days past. I suppose we shall pay for it.

I have sent Mr. B—— to choose his ship, and where he can be of most use, and shall recommend him to every attention.

29th October, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I have received the chart this morning, and it is sent. The buoys are marked, and in truth no ship has any business within any of them unless to attack an enemy.

I shall write about the well; it will be of great use and save money. I hope to hear of Captain Bligh soon. Here is a fellow from Whitstable stopped by Lord Proby with letters to Sir Sidney, but I do not know who sent them, but I have desired to know.

November 2nd, 1803.

Dear Markham,—Thornbrough will do admirably for an active officer on the north coast. Do you wish the *Repulse* to go into the Humber or the *Gelijckheid* to go there at once, and Russell's flag to be in the *Repulse pro tempore*? My orders to Captain Hawkins and Captain Broughton were to place the ships as near the mouth of the river as was prudent, and by no means in Booth roads, which was strongly recommended by the Hull people merely that the men might escape being impressed; and both agreed in preferring Grimsby road, or rather two miles below it, where

the Helder now is. It was principally with this view I wished to have seen the situation myself, having never been in the river. It continues to blow very hard; the ships in the Thames ride very hard but they are all safe, and it is now high water, the worst time for them.

[*Private.*]

4 November, 1803.

Dear Markham,—The circumstance you mention about the Brest fleet, or detachment of it, I do not think likely to happen, but it is certainly possible. The times are different since the days of Elizabeth; our enemy is more active; there is a telegraph from Brest to the Texel; the fleet quitting port might be announced along shore in five hours. On its appearance with a fair wind on any part of the coast, passing up Channel, the intelligence might be carried with equal rapidity; and a continuance in the Downs or Margate forty-eight hours would enable a great force to be sent across the water and take a situation until more arrived. But the means you mention, and others, would defeat this purpose, which requires consideration, inasmuch as the stake is deep. Suppose, upon strong east winds continuing for days, cruisers were kept to drop out and be off the Four passage and Ushant to watch, and if a fleet sailed, to stand to the nearest shore with information of its sailing and conduct; this to be passed up to a squadron in Cawsand, Torbay, Weymouth, or Portland, St. Helen's, or the Downs. If in either of these places there was a force ready to slip, there would be an end of the expedition; but if not so, there might be danger. I do not see any signal for the signal stations sufficiently expressive of an enemy's squadron, and its force, being at sea and in the Channel—I mean ships of war only.

I send you some information about the Favers-

ham smack. It seems a very impudent thing for men to pretend they come from the admiralty when they did not, and may lead others to a practice very unsafe ; but I have not the least doubt that by such means all that newspaper scribbling is carried on. The father, uncle, brothers, are all alike extremely troublesome people. Sir Sidney has never yet appeared off Flushing. Six of his officers and some men had been sent on shore and could not regain the ship. They boarded a neutral and brought her to Dover. Admiral Montagu sent out the people to look for Sir Sidney, but Captain Bligh told me they had not found the *Antelope*. All this I had from Captain Bligh, for neither the commodore nor admiral told me of it.

That silly body Essington is putting nonsense into the heads of the Fencibles at Dover about not embarking under sea officers. He plagued me about his rank. I told him the admiralty could yet give commissions to men to command at land, and that men were bound in duty to embark in a moment of danger and follow the directions of those in a situation to direct, and who had prepared their minds to that end ; but when he had left me, he told Captain Stewart it was impossible for him to serve under an inferior, and he could not embark, &c. I hope to put it all right by writing to Mr. Pitt or going over and talking to the people.

5 November, 1803.

The weather is better, but it still blows hard and looks like snow. In consequence of the intelligence of this day, I have ordered all the ships to their stations as fast as possible and renewed the orders to look out. I find none of the ships are furnished with hand grenades. In general I do not

like them, but on this occasion they may [be] useful; I write for them. The Burnham, Malden, and Harwich vessels are important for the Wallet, and the mouths of the rivers farther north may wait. If he comes, the Trinity ships must drop down to the Blacktail and Mouse. I sent you the name of the master of the vessel. I think there should be an example—there were many letters, as I hear; I cannot take up any one. Peers are not justices of the peace without being named in the commission or being privy councillors.

6th November, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I hope you will proceed against those who personated admiralty authority to deter others. I think the plot begins to thicken on the other side, and something will soon be tried; look well to the French ships and Augereau's army for Ireland. I send you Captain Searle's account of what passed at Boulogne, which is just what I wrote the board would happen. I never saw a shore so covered with artillery in my life. Johnstone is one of the Monarch's pilots. We are all alert here. The story of the boat I never heard of; it shall be enquired into.

7th November, 1803.

I have sent orders to be cautious of any further attacks at Boulogne unless the gun-boats really quit the flats. I believe their coming out a trap for our ships; they had about sixty out; the rest seemed the common boats of the town.

I hope you have ordered a new foremast for the *Immortalité*; it will not be begun till you do; she is idle in the meantime.

Lieutenant Shephard has done well. I wish

he had told us the fate of the brig inshore and what had become of the convoy. I have written to enquire.

Lord St. Vincent promised to send Mr. Bredin to the West Indies for promotion. Has he forgot him?

I enclose Captain Hotham's letter.

8th November, 1803.

My dear Markham,—I had anticipated your orders respecting restraining wanton attacks on places impregnable. Leopard has sailed, and I hope the Empress will turn out well. We have [an] active month before us yet. I want a light ship to go to the Ems to stop the mast ships; they are all for France or Holland. I see no cause for any difficulty or trouble to the officers if people did not sometimes choose to be lazy. Captain Seater has moved his ship up without orders. I have rebuked him, and shall remove none of them before I get yours.

November 10th, 1803.

I send you the dimensions of the French gun-boat; I am going to look at her; she may do for the press gang to man at some place. I begin to think they are going to give up Boulogne; it is too easy to watch it for their purpose. A little time will show us.

Helvoet is weak. I send a gun-brig to remain till the other ships can be got together. I am making an instruction for Admiral Thornbrough to take charge of the Texel, and generally all the ships at sea on the north coast. He is very active and will keep them out.

I have ordered out Sir S. S. immediately.

10th November, 1803.

I have seen the French gun-vessel—no great things. Has a fore-castle under which is the large gun door open to let it out. Aft a deck and small gun to fire either way ; hatches open along the waist ; board gangways. The gun could not be used in any sea, but I think she may be useful in any of the Essex rivers or in smooth water. I enclose you a letter from the first lieutenant of the *Constance* ; he is son to the Hon. Admiral Napier. I wish you could move him into something else. Griffiths is, I am told, hard to live with.

November 11th, 1803.

Dear Markham,—In a day of need we shall find men for the Indian ships. I am really of opinion the Ferrol squadron has some communication with Augereau's army at Bayonne, and may come on the west of Ireland or up the Channel, as you glance at — so covering a descent as they pass up the Channel. Too much precaution cannot be used ; it is the safe side to err on. I do not think they will stop at Cancale, it is too open and come-at-able unless the Brest fleet was with them. I have written you about the gun-boat already. The weather is very hard and many of our ships remain at anchor ; in fact at present, the *Magicienne* has been long in. I snarl every day at them.

12th November, 1803.

Dear Markham,—We must never remove a squadron from Brest again because there are boats and men there ; my notion is that it is their army of reserve kept to throw over after a first landing, supposing we shall all fly to one point, for all the best troops are there. I think Sir S. Smith will do well enough. I have been fully positive in my

orders and shall continue. I long ago thought of an anchorage at Flushing, but it is nonsense ; the first calm day and floodtide they would destroy any ship or gun-boats on the Scheldt with fire-vessels. You see how his accounts and Captain Hope's differ. Griffiths is a good, honourable fellow, but sharp, I am told. You will see the result of the report of the Batavier's boat is void of foundation. There is a foolish paragraph-maker hereabouts who has made me converse with people I never saw, give balls and dinners to those whose names are unknown to me, and provided me a Lady Keith without my consent.

I write on half a sheet ; my paper is all used, but I expect more.

19th November, 1803.

Dear M.,—You see what false information one gets. I sent the *Active* to look into Calais ; Mr. Sargeant, the master, is an inhabitant of the town ; he went within three-fourths of a mile. I enclose his sketch, not very well finished. I have sent Captain Stewart to Dunkirk. The stationing of the ships ought to have been sent up before yesterday, but had been forgotten. I had ordered the *Hecate* to the Nore before the board order came, that things might be put to rights.

20th November, 1803.

Dear Markham,—The loss of the *Circe* is unfortunate ; her men, and a good lot from Leith, will go far to man the *Hero* and *Glatton*. Captain Mitford is a gentleman, but, I have heard, a little harsh in his command. It is a difficult subject to mention or I would [talk] to him on the subject ; it is of high importance to keep men in temper at

this time. Stewart is gone over the water to Dunkirk.

Nothing new.

7th December, 1803.

Dear Jack,—I have given the most strict injunctions about the expenditure of water, but between ourselves I think an allowance of water at home would tell ill, and be made a handle of to create clamour and disturbance. You will see there is plenty to be got if craft is sent to transport it. I was not pleased at Dover; at Sandwich you may water all the navy. I fear much for the Unicorn; it is odd nothing is heard of her yet.

9th December, 1803.

Dear Markham,—Stewart is over, and this clear weather I hope will enable him to tell us something. He is ordered to look at Ostend, in addition to the board's order to examine Dunkirk; but I have had an idea of some old launches or the like being carried on the booms, and combustible matter sent on board the ships properly secured, so that on a favourable moment they might be fitted and sent chained two and two into Boulogne or to any other harbour. The risk is nothing if well managed, the effect is chance. I have said nothing of this, fearing it might get wind, and the enemy put a boom across the piers.

I think two East India ships would be of use in Cromarty or at Fort George; by lending men to each other one might go out and drive away a privateer. The Wallet and Westgate Bay are well calculated for such as may not be otherwise called for, because there are men in plenty to put on board in a short notice. I think those sent to Loch Ryan should be directed to give special attention to Belfast

and Strangford on the opposite shore, and in Arran they have an excellent harbour (Lamlash) if caught that way. I am glad Cunningham is coming to regulate the water business; it is so cold here, all must be frozen in Holland ere this. Montagu discharged his public duties well; a little imperious—his private letters are full of the most warm expressions of attachment and perfect content. Of course, if he was at anything underhand he is a Jesuit indeed.

Patton looks a good man. I was struck by his appearance; I have been to Deal to set him a going.

[*Private.*]

11th December, 1803.

I think the boat plan feasible and may succeed; if not, the loss is not great, and if managed well, no risk of men. A stock of boats must be at Deal to supply the expedition; the combustible matter seems to be the object of most importance. Captain Wright is returned and writes me he is going again; is his sloop ready to come down? Orders had been sent for the Humber ships to anchor on the bank. I had consulted the Trinity House on the safety of the road. The last was a vile night. I hope there will be no damage done.

14th December, 1803.

Dear Markham,—Your letter with the loss of the Shannon affects me very much, as I much fear the Avenger is lost off the Weser.

It is now one month that Captain Stewart has been attempting to look at Dunkirk without success. I send his report of Ostend public and private.

The intelligence from Holland seems odd and contradictory. I can see the trade of information has moved from Dover to Yarmouth. If anything good is got in that quarter, what becomes of it? for it

never reaches me ; all that which is good comes by neutrals, and people not interested to tell lies. If I find, however, transports or anything like an expedition coming down to the New or Mars Dieps, I shall order the Repulse ready. Russell must shift into some other ship for a time. I have anchored off Bridlington Quay and Filey, but I doubt its being good for anything in the winter months ; they are open to east winds. I think it next to impossible they can set out an expedition of large ships from the Texel at this season. I hope the Shannon will not be destroyed. The weather still looks very bad.

16th December, 1803.

Lieutenant Hancock's letter is a curious performance, but they are all of a tribe. Wright was the secretary. I made him a lieutenant, and when I went to Egypt had six applications for court-martials ; to which I replied, if they persisted I must order one on the general conduct of captain and officers, so I heard no more. I had to send Scorpion to the Texel, and shall make her cruise off Flamborough till the Orestes can return. The Fury is run foul by an Indian ship, and dismasted ; the Meuse is down, I will get her round immediately. Fleeming writes me he is ordered to take eight months' provisions where he is going ; I hope not India, as he is not yet recovered of his liver complaint he got there. I am glad you have ordered out the Repulse, as I had intended it to be on the safe side.

18th December, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I am glad the Antelope is safe ; we have damage enough already. If the man from Rotterdam is a true man we may get some intelligence. Nothing, I imagine, can be more

agreeable than the trip intended for Fleeming, and it may be beneficial. Here has been Blackwood very urgent to get the command at Havre. The ship would answer, but he is not equal to Oliver, who is sensible, so we shall see how he goes on at Boulogne for a while. I fear we have lost many men in the North Sea by boat work. It is not a climate for it ; and what information is to be got from a peasant or a fisherman in any country ?

East wind, but much surf on shore.

[*Secret.*]

21st December, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I shall desire to see the cutter's journal, for Lieutenant Stewart, of the Griffin, has been on the same service, and told me he had never seen Wright but under the Ness at anchor. There is no integrity in that clique, but if I may use your private letter I will find it out. I really have no cause to complain of the officers in general. The SW winds blow right on that shore, and there is not above nine miles between the coast and the ridge, which is a small shoal in a strong tideway. In east winds they all anchor three miles off upon the Banc de Baas.¹ Viney only waits for Captain Wright I am told. I hope all our ships are safe ; indeed, it seems clear they have all been seen since the report, the Avenger excepted.

In your letter of this day you mention officers on half pay in Scotland, and about employing them. If they are good men and openings for them, why not ? but not otherwise ; and I do not know them, Captain Milne excepted. He had been in the India service, and was recommended to me by my brother the director. Are these Sea Fencibles, on the coast of Fife, at Culross and Kincardine ? At

¹ Bassure de Baas.

Alloa none yet, but plenty of men. Your expression respecting Captain Wright and others, &c., being intended as spies, surprises me. By whom are they sent? I am unconnected with party or politics, and according to the understanding God granted me, endeavour to discharge my duty to the public; and if I can discover that any branch of the government have not confidence in me I shall request to make way for the man they may prefer. Such times require the ablest men that can be got. I am not uninformed that Sir S. S. wants the Downs command independent, with a captain; his uncle told me nearly to this effect. I send you the examination of the French officers. The seaman says the boats are unfit for any purpose. One of them says he was in Egypt, and that the poisoning of the hospital was the act of a great man because it was necessary.

The Enclosed.

No. 436 gun-boat, 21 December, 1803.

Charles Barbron, capitaine 36^{me} Regiment of infantry at Boulogne.—Left Dunkirk on Sunday, the 18th inst., and was taken on the following day at noon by the Basilisk. Very few or no French troops at Dunkirk. He denies that there has been any dissatisfaction or mutiny amongst the French troops at Boulogne; at least that he has not heard of any. Does not seem inclined to give any information.

Louis Herbeant, commissary of a division of gun-boats, fifteen in number.—Was put on board the above gun-boat from some other vessel. Came from Flushing. There are more than 300 gun-boats at Flushing; are all

manned. There are 21,000 troops there. Boats are building in most of the small towns in Holland, in which country there are a great number of French troops. Denies that there has been any disturbance.

Lautoune Lorin Sierre, Ens. de vaisseau, commanding the gun-boat No. 436.—Does not know what number of troops are at Dunkirk, but there are a great many in the neighbourhood. There are only two gun-boats at Dunkirk, and none building there. Says that he has not heard of any disturbance amongst the troops at Boulogne. He observed that the men in the companies were of all ages—26, 36, 46; that quarrels frequently took place amongst themselves; and that it was no unusual thing for two or three of them to be killed in these quarrels.

The navy and army are well paid; it is a month ago since they began to be paid so well.

22nd December, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I am apt to discredit the information of Gilman, the pilot, respecting the force in the Texel. I hope he has been examined closely. Thornbrough must have seen or heard if such a fleet had been actually there.

The Shannon has been burnt, and the captain of the Merlin asks salvage—somewhat new. I hope the solicitors will be able to obtain proof of that infamy in the Lark. Captains should be on their guard at this time. The punishments in the Lynx were frequent, and far too severe without trial. I find the Antelope has been ashore off Flushing, but not from him—he never writes me.

23rd December, 1803.

Dear Sir,—On the receipt of letters this day I have sent cutters and expresses in all directions to press out anything that is in port. You will see by the letters of this day the coast of France is well watched, but it is impossible to impede the small craft without many more cutters or luggers. I have written Morris to soothe the pilots all he can for the present. I am ready to embark in an instant whenever the fine weather comes. I will cause fit the boats at Dungeness, and try them under Owen and some others I have in view. I shall have two cutters for any orders the secretary of state may incline to send, and I think the two men you mention will do very well.

[*Secret.*]

December 23rd, 1803.

My dear Markham,—I made no allusion to the admiralty, because if it had been so they would not have put me here, nor would I have come without the fullest intention of a strict discharge of duty ; but if any other branch are capable of setting men to watch the admiralty or their officers by secret or hidden means, I think it an improper interference, and were I convinced it was so, nothing should induce me to submit to it. Admiral Russell has detached cutters. I enquired by whose orders, but did not wish to know the contents even if he did, giving for reason I found improper use had been made of certain names. I send you his answer that you may judge where the authority came from. I am most sincerely, &c.

The Enclosed.

My Lord,—The private note with which your lordship has honoured [me] has very much em-

barrassed me. Indulge me with permission to ask how I can send copies of secret orders without communicating the whole subject?

Need I assure your lordship that no act of mine shall ever affect your lordship's honour or interest, or the public service?

Poor Gardner is deeply distressed lest your lordship should for a moment suppose him capable of disobedience. I did not (of course) reprove him. May I beg, my lord, that you would set his heart at ease? I dare not ask who dared to impose so great a falsehood, and asperse one of your lordship's officers.

I am, with the highest respect,

Your lordship's obedient, humble servant,

T. M. RUSSELL.

To the Right Hon. Lord Keith, K.B., &c., &c.

24th December, 1803.

My dear Markham,—The Paris letter is dated the 18th, it must have got to London the 21st, as I got it on the 23rd; had the spy come in chaise and four, and had a packet boat at Calais waiting for him, and the like attention on this side of the water, he could not have performed the route in so short a time. I was certain the Dutch news could not be exact, but while the weather is open it is our duty to be guarded. I think that first the Bay is of consequence to be attended to although inland seems pretty strong—here there is no fear of us. Cornwallis holds out famously.

[*Secret.*]

24th December, 1803.

Dear Sir,—On the subject of cutters employed under the secretary of state there is no reason why I should be let into the secrets they may contain, but it seems decent I should be acquainted

with the vessels so employed, and not be told by my inferiors such vessels are absent. But I am not at liberty to tell you anything more. All the cutters which require repairs I have ordered here, where I see them every day, and hasten them; moreover, my communication with the Downs is seldom interrupted, as at Deal, by surf; besides, it is so private that any person may land or embark without being seen or seeing anyone by means of a private gate to the pier. I am confident it is a far better place than Deal, and if anything is to be expected it could be better done; but you will find this will not be the opinion of the gentlemen at the twice laid shop in Deal, who will not like to have any one to check their nonsense.

Christmas, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I hope the Hero will take no damage; it blows a storm from the west; on the opposite shore it must be bad enough. Here is the Griffin cutter, Lieutenant Stuart, who went with Captain Wright; he says he understands the captain has been at Walmer since Tuesday last. I asked him no questions, but he said it appeared to him something was not right, and that he was sure it was only when they (the French) liked that any communication took place, &c., &c., &c. I hope the Carysfort will be able to put to rights in Leith; the gales have been hard on the trade of late.

26th December, 1803.

Dear Markham,—Although I dare say you have the enclosed, I send it, and shall press everything belonging to that station without delay. Do you ever hear anything from Sir Sidney Smith? He does not communicate to me; it is thirty-five days since he left Yarmouth, and I have no report

of any sort. The *Amelia* will be stopped for want of pilots; if some measures are not taken by the government for the regulation of that class of men, we shall not be able to keep a ship at sea; the nation is completely at their mercy. I have heard no bad news from the fleet yet after the gale of yesterday, which was most severe; the merchant ships have suffered in the Downs much.

28th December, 1803.

Dear Markham,—If you are so good as send me a bill touching the pilots I will look it over and go to Mr. Pitt, and if nothing can be done then the measure you propose will be beneficial, indeed necessary; it is at present quite shocking.

Thornbrough's account I take to be conclusive and shall call in some of them to be ready, as the weather bears hard on us. I add *St. Margarita* to *Flushing*. The *Chiffonne* has been ashore on the coast of Norway, but now in *Cromarty Bay*.

Mr. Banks only waits a day proper to fix the light on the *Galloper*. Captain Morris was here yesterday; he complains bitterly of *Dungeness*. At *Boulogne* thirty brigs, schooners, or galliots, perhaps 200 luggers; they are far up, impossible to be counted, the heads of the masts only visible; 2,000 men constantly at work at *Ambleteuse*, *Tour d'Ordres* and the harbour; more huts in the eastern camp, but they do not seem full, and but few lights in the night to be seen. I am confident such a force cannot quit that dry harbour in less than two tides. I find two watchboats are kept out all night on the edge of the dry bank when the weather will permit of it. The journals I have ordered to be delivered by all cutters, and shall send them in common with others, if not of a nature to require secrecy, in which case I will transmit extracts myself.

Gilman, the lying pilot, deserves to be punished, he must have told that story of the Dutch fleet on purpose.

30th December, 1803.

Dear Markham,—Morris feels the importance of the Dungeness station, and will hang on to the last. I send you a letter from Captain Owen in answer to queries of mine. Sir J. Warren wrote me long ago that it was believed the attack from Holland was to be on Scotland or the north of Ireland conditionally, and I gave him my opinion as to Dutch transports and French gun-boats making that voyage unprotected by ships of war. It is surprising how little men consider the difficulty of landing and supporting an army in an enemy's country; but when we had to do the like, every obstacle was magnified to an impossibility, as Cadiz and Aboukir can bear witness. The weather is still as bad as can be, but hitherto I have not heard of any great damage. I have a letter from Yarmouth from a merchant. We are full of intelligence and reports furnished by the gallant knight, which do not always obtain credit.

I have got and read the new Pilot Act; it is not worth a fig.

FROM CAPTAIN OWEN

[Enclosed by Lord Keith.]

H.M.S. *Immortalité*, Downs, 26th December, 1803.

My Lord,—It never was my opinion that anything more was intended on the side of Boulogne than a feint to draw a large military force to this part of

the country, whilst the attempt is made elsewhere ; nor does the accumulation of vessels at Boulogne at all alter my opinion. Nevertheless, as the number of those vessels is now considerable, and the distance short, it is necessary to watch them closely whenever they can move.

Of the number of lugger-rigged gun-vessels at Boulogne it is impossible to judge. On the 5th November the force outside was six brigs and schooners, fifty-six luggers and six row-boats, which I consider (as more were then in the harbour) about as many as they could get out in that tide, which was a neap. In the afternoon from twenty to thirty more were got out. From the appearance of the harbour then and now, I should think the number of luggers nearly double, or about 150, perhaps 200, for it is impossible to say. The weather was so very hazy during the whole time I was off there last, that we could not ascertain the number of square-rigged vessels, but I think them about thirty brigs and schooners, lying in three separate divisions in the harbour, with a portion of luggers attached to and between each. They are close alongside each other and as thick as they can be stowed ; many of them, if not the whole, certainly within the range of shells, provided the bombs are themselves placed under the fire of the enemy's batteries. The most likely method to succeed in destroying them, I think, would be by fire-boats, but in using them it is necessary to watch narrowly for a favourable time, which at this season rarely offers, for the weather has been so unsettled, it is impossible to trust the boats away two hours at a time. Sloop-rigged fishing vessels, as worked with the fewest hands, furnished with swift rowing boats, I should think well calculated for the purpose. The enemy have several fishing boats at all times out, but I have

doubts whether they are permitted to enter the harbour by night. When I was last there a lugger was brought out to exercise under oars, firing the bow gun, and musketry from the stern sheets, where the soldiers were raised on platforms to fire over the heads of the rowers, in the manner I suppose it is intended they should approach the beach. A very long row-boat with three very handsome square lug-sails and a jib attended her. I doubt much if vessels laden with stones could be sunk in proper situations for blocking the harbour; for the flat being dry for half the tide, they would, with the immense number of workmen there, soon remove them, allowing they were well placed, and if sunk outside the flat they would not interrupt the navigation of the small vessels. Of the works on shore, since your lordship was there, the enemy have erected a battery of three guns, and one, if not two, mortars on Point d'Alprech, and placed a mortar in the battery next northward from St. Jean. The new works at Portel and Bomb Point are at a stand, but they proceed night and day with the basin and entrance of Ambleteuse, at which place huts have been erected for the soldiers, and the extent of the camp increased. At Wimereux, about a mile north of Tour d'Ordres, or Cropic, they have begun to form another basin and batteries to protect it, at which they work incessantly, and have a camp adjoining, which has latterly increased much. The camp on the heights north-east of Boulogne appears also increased in extent, and several wooden houses for superior officers are erected, viz. one in this camp, two at the signal post on the hill over the harbour's mouth, and one at Wimereux. It has, however, been a general remark that very few men are seen at any of the camps except that of Wimereux. A telegraph is placed on the steeple of the lower

town, whose signals are repeated by one on the hill back from Boulogne, and which we observe frequently worked. There was also a lugger gun-vessel in attendance when I was last there. With respect to the cruising close in with Boulogne, your lordship is well aware how impossible it is to prevent boats from passing along shore, and which are the only vessels I have seen on this part of the coast, except one sloop, which in a strong NE wind and thick weather came round Cape Grisnez, and was chased on shore at the harbour's mouth by the Countess of Elgin, which was then off Boulogne with me. And except also the small convoy, chased by the Leda on the 21st, which in a thick fog got past the Leopard, Leda, and Harpy, who were to the southward of Boulogne, whilst *Immortalité*, *Fortunée*, *Sulphur*, and *Duchess of Cumberland* and *Bloodhound* were to the northward between Boulogne and Cape Grisnez, and from whence our boats were detached, though too late in the tide to close them before they got into the road. To cruise close in at this season of the year, unless with settled off-shore winds, is impossible, and though I am very far from agreeing with the representations of the pilots, we must be prepared in baffling winds, as well as those which block up the port, to take care of ourselves; although it is possible with such winds for the enemy to pass vessels from port to port. I, however, beg to assure your lordship that I will use every possible perseverance in keeping my station off Boulogne when the weather will allow, as well as in recovering it when driven off by unsettled or bad weather; who have the honour to be

your lordship's very obedient

and very humble servant.

E. W. C. R. OWEN.

5th, 1804.

Admiral Patton's letter is all I have as yet heard of the French boats, which were seen going along shore from the eastward. Captain Wright went off yesterday in the Hound. He talks of sixty officers at Southampton. He wants a 20-gun ship to be sent for. His conversation was much at large, and in some circumstances not correct, and there are stories in circulation here of a ridiculous nature respecting the intercourse on the other side. This instant I am informed of the enemies' boats being brought into the Downs. I shall have the men examined, and am sincerely,

KEITH.

7th January, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I am glad you have got another sea lord to take some of the labour off your hands.¹ What becomes of Garthshore?²

I send you Owen's letter of remarks. I hope you have small ships and brigs or schooners coming on. Our wear and tear is and must be excessive, and that armament in the Texel will become vexatious in the spring.

Wright thinks France is ripe for insurrection, or pretends to think so. You know he came from town with a lot of loyalists, and got the Basilisk to carry them over. They got into her boat after appointing a rendezvous, settling signals, &c., with all the mummery, and off they went; but kept the boat, and they sent out five of the gun-boats from Boulogne, which attempted to surprise and ram the Basilisk. This I know to be a fact.

¹ Admiral Sir Harry Burrard Neale, Bart., 17th January, 1804.

² Mr. William Garthshore, civil lord, retired January 1804. He died of grief in April 1806, owing to his wife's death.

[*Private.*]

January 8th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I send you Captain Owen's letter, received last night by the Griffin.

My letters were too late to catch the post at Canterbury, to which place I sent them by a dragoon, otherwise they would have told you everything was out—the flagships and *Perseus* (which cannot go) excepted; but the enemies' craft run only with fair winds, and keep too near the shore to be intercepted, unless by vessels who can cross the sands at all times of tide.

Boulogne harbour seems now so full that I think the fire-boats might be attempted. I think the enemy came out either to exercise or draw our ships under their fire. You should build more gun-brigs; some of them sail well, and they are handy vessels hereabouts.

Now that it is evident an expedition of some extent is preparing at the Texel, it seems odd that *Monsieurs* do not shut up the Dutch ports.

10th January, 1804.

Dear Markham,—The person shall be attended to as soon as I am informed where he is. This is the best place, as he may embark from my door without ever entering the town or being seen by any but my own family. It was the five men brought by Captain Wright from London, I am told, who kept the *Basilisk's* boat and sent the vessels to the rendezvous to fall upon her. I think you might get gun-brigs built at the outports without affecting the prices. It is of little consequence their being coppered; we can wash their bottoms once a month in some of the dry harbours with all in. I give Captain Wright the Admiral Mitchell

and Hound cutters, but can afford him no more. The Vincejo is at a stand for want of officers, Admiral Rowley writes me. Here is a fine day; everything is out. I send you Hope's letter, which you may like to read.

[*Secret.*]

11th January, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I enclose you a letter received last night, although dated the 8th, from Captain Wright. I kept two good cutters for him. You see he proposes Southampton, for which I ought to have the board's permission. I will send the Squirrel, or Brilliant if she comes down in time, unless the Champion, which is at Spithead, would answer the purpose, provided she is not to proceed to Bantry Bay. There has been some firing this morning on the other side. The wind is SE; fine weather, but too hazy to see far or distinguish signals in the Downs. I have a letter from Lord Hawkesbury recommending attention to Captain Wright. I send you Admiral Bligh's letter, and one from Mr. Whidbey; but I doubt Aberlady to be safe in NE winds during winter. The ground is fine sand. Longannet is the place I wrote to the board about fifteen months ago as being fit for a dock or store, and where ships at all times could repair or shift a mast, water or victual, which is not the case in Leith. The property is mine, and the public may make what bargain they like. There are in the town 200 artificers constantly employed building for sale.

You shall have my ideas at large on the rendezvous for the flotilla to-morrow; the places appointed here are Dover, Ramsgate, and Margate.

A smuggler told Mr. Banks this morning that he would not come to me, but had left Flushing on

Sunday, where there were 400 vessels full of troops. I do not believe it.

[*Private.*]

Earl Cliff, 12 January, 1804.

Dear Sir,—In reply to your letter to me of the 10th respecting the rendezvousing of the armed boats, I refer you to my General Provisional Instruction to the senior officer commanding Sea Fencibles, a copy of which I forwarded to Sir Evan Nepean, for the information and approbation of the board before I issued it, in which it has been left to the discretion of those officers to assemble them at such rendezvous as they may judge more convenient for receiving orders, attacking the enemy, and co-operating with the force employed on their right or on their left as circumstances may require ; which has a general tendency to draw them toward any point against which the enemy's efforts may be directed. For your convenience I enclose such extracts from my general order above mentioned as relate to these subjects. It is certainly essential to have these vessels early called out, but without unnecessarily distressing, and consequently disgusting, the proprietors. The great points of rendezvous strike me to be :—

Harwich, where the water is deep, the craft of that district being able to resist any kind of weather.

The Swin for Captain Beaver's district, which that officer has suggested to me as the best, and in whose opinion I have signified my acquiescence.

Whitstable appears to me to be the proper rendezvous for the launches and boats armed at the dockyards in the river Medway.

Of the Thames boats I have heard nothing since they were taken from under the command of Captain Bullen.

Margate presents itself as the best for the boats

fitted there as well as at Broadstairs and Ramsgate, should the enemy feint toward the river Thames. But Dover, if he is bent to the westward; and Rye, Shoreham, Newhaven and Hastings in succession. The latter place is on a beach, but I believe that the boats can be launched from it at any time when it is possible for the enemy to land.

Should the enemy's embarkation proceed from Flushing, I think it is fair to conclude that we shall be apprised of it before their vessels can, from their slow sailing, approach our coast. If from Boulogne, we must see them embarking, for it cannot be done in one tide.

Whenever it is ascertained that an embarkation is actually taking place, it is my intention, in addition to communications by signal, to send dragoons along the coast on each side, with instructions for making necessary preparations, and transmitting my opinions at the same time, which, of course, must be governed by considerations of the state of the weather, prevailing winds, and the information which I receive respecting the ports from which the enemy's expedition is issuing.

Extracts from instructions to officers commanding Sea Fencibles, respecting assembling and rendezvousing their vessels, and co-operating with each other:—

‘When certain intelligence shall be received by you, or when the signal shall be made upon the coast, that the enemy are about to quit their ports or that they are actually at sea, you will resort to the most prompt and effectual means for preparing for immediate service such of the vessels above mentioned as may then be in port, and for collecting them with the greatest despatch at such rendezvous where you may judge it most convenient to assemble them, and hold yourself in

readiness for receiving orders from me, and from any of the flag officers employed upon the command, or for acting in concert with any squadron of his Majesty's ships that may appear.

'You will, on all occasions, hold in view the necessity of co-operating, by means of the whole or a part of the force under your direction, as circumstances may require, with the officers employed upon your right or left, exercising your discretion thereon according to the information that you may obtain, &c., &c.'

13th January, 1804.

Dear Markham,—This Captain Wright has come to Deal in the night and called on Admiral Patton for two cutters (*Speculator* and *Flirt*), with which vessels he has set off. Thus he has the Admiral Mitchell, *Hound*, and *Griffin* doing he only knows what, whilst I have only two small vessels of all those belonging to the Downs station to watch the coast from Ostend to Calais, as you will observe by the return, and that, too, at this important moment. I send the letters I have written him. I am at a loss what to do about the *Champion*; he only mentioned the subject to me at a distance, but promised to wait upon me when he returned from the coast of France, but which he has not done. At Flushing there are about eighty vessels, but certainly no troops embarked.

If ever government make an establishment in the Firth I am convinced Longannet will be found the best—I may say the only—situation proper for it.

Copy of letter to Captain Wright.

Monarch, off Ramsgate, 13 January, 1804.

Sir,—I have written to Lord Hawkesbury that I have appropriated the Admiral Mitchell hired

cutter, and the Hound revenue cutter, in addition to the hired vessel which is at your disposal to enable you to perform the service on which you are employed, these two being as many as I can possibly spare at the present moment. You will, therefore, not consider the Flirt, Speculator, or any other of the several vessels, than the two before mentioned, as being subject to be employed by you. The Champion is now at Spithead ready to proceed to carry into effect the service which you mentioned to me when here ; but your sudden departure from Deal, without any communication whatever with me, renders it impossible that she can remain idle there, when the important station to which she is attached is so slenderly provided for.

I take this opportunity of repeating my opinion that Ramsgate seems much better calculated for a place of secret embarkation than Deal, where the surf is frequently too great to be passed.

I am, &c., &c.,


KEITH.

To Captain Wright.

15th January.

Dear Markham,—I much rejoice you are about to hire small vessels ; there is a constant call for them from all quarters. If Captain Wright would be open he would get what he wanted, but that does not belong to the House. Mystery is the word. I have a letter from Lord St. Vincent. By the Phoenix cutter I shall put Sir Sidney on his guard.

I hardly think there has been wind to drive the St. Albans on shore, but I am anxious for the York. I have this instant a letter containing the report of the St. Albans being safe.



16th January, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I have received the secret information on which I depend, for in truth Bonaparte begins to discover he hath to do with an element he little understands; at the same time he is compelled to do something, or at least to talk of it. He may cripple our ships, the cure for which is a succession of them, and I am glad to see you are advertising for gun-vessels (could not they be spar-decked?), which are of an easy draft of water and strong. I had sent to Sir Sidney yesterday to put him on his guard, but shall circulate the contents of the enemies' plan to-day. I have got a passport for a David Banks—is it our friend?—he is out at the Galloper still. I am, very sincerely, &c.

Dear Markham,—I am obliged by your letter. Poor Jack was long very ill; I suppose he died of palsy. I find no water can be got at Dungeness; our ships are on the ground tiers. I have ordered them to take opportunities of west winds to anchor in Dover roads for it; the victualling board has not craft enough there. I am looking for some good man to go to look at Dunkirk—I think Captain Stewart. I had ordered l'Aimable to Helvoet and the Virginie away to leave Manby¹ the senior officer; he has been so much there, Beresford² never at all. I do not know what Admiral Montagu means by his complaint of Captain Godwin, who showed me his order, and I told him to proceed. It is true I wrote to Montagu that if there was any trade for Plymouth or Ireland he might take them and save a ship going on purpose, so I suppose Godwin passed through the Downs without anchoring.

¹ Thomas Manby, captain of the *Africaine*.

² John Poo Beresford, captain of the *Virginie*.

20th January, 1804.

Dear Markham,—The Chiffonne has been at sea and put back to Cromarty, where she was ready to sail on the 10th, but the wind at SE blew hard. Here is Captain Wright returned; he seems not satisfied, and writes in a style not to be understood. As his correspondence is of a private nature, I send it to Lord St. V——, a cabinet minister, that his lordship may be ready to answer any representations the other may make, and at the same time be convinced how ready I am to do anything short of placing the whole squadron at the disposal of Captain Wright, and thereby incurring censure. It blows hard and is impossible to keep anything of twelve feet off Ostend and Dunkirk at this season.

21st January, 1804.

Dear Markham,—As Kirkaldie, the pilot, thinks Captain Bligh has made some mistakes in his bearings in the Flushing sketch, I send you his (Kirkaldie's) chart for Dalrymple to compare, and pray beg he will send it again to me. Banks is returned not quite successful, but I will place the vessel better the first favourable moment. The Arab is in the Downs; I have no order to take under command; she will supply the Amaranthe's place. I have not yet heard that the navy board have hitherto caused any of the cutters or luggers to be surveyed.

23rd January, 1804.

Dear Markham,—Captain Wright has two of the largest cutters and seems content, but he wanted a power to direct any ships or vessels on the station at pleasure. He shall want for nothing if he will ask, but he cadgels with General Smith and the

colonel at Deal, added to the old father at Dover ; they are all mad with vanity, and hold no terms in their abuse of all such as do not hold up their nonsense, to call it by no worse name.

I am obliged to send the Bloodhound to the Nore, all to pieces by the Arab running foul of her. Lord C[ochrane] gives a sad account of the latter.

30th January [1804].

Dear Markham,—There is more trouble with these Deal pilots ; it is time some measure was taken to punish their insolence and ingratitude. They are far too rich, and abandon the interest of their country at a moment their services are required to an illicit commerce, which is carried on to a wonderful extent.

London pilots ought to be permitted to carry up ships as well as down ; a branch for king's pilots, to have preference of all others so long as any were unemployed.

3rd February, 1804.

Dear Jack,—I am very sorry for the distress in your family, which I hope is over. I did not hear Lord St. Vincent was ill until this day ; I am sorry for it. I began with him in '62—not a short period of human life.¹ I shall send the remarks to Kirkaldie, who is certainly a good pilot. Banks is off at the Galloper. I have a long information from Captain Wright, parts of which seem likely to be real, although high painting. You have seen it, of course ; a little time will show us if the intelligence is well founded. I have a letter from Captain Adam, still confined at Cromarty by tempests of south wind and rain. Mr. Pitt is, or pretends to be, much inclined to assist ; he has sent to say he is going to town, but will call on me before he goes.

¹ In the Gosport on the home and North American stations.

I intend going to Deal to meet the deputy wardens and talk to them. I send you a letter on this subject I have got from Captain Searle.

7th February, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I have received yours since I wrote in the morning. Robb is here and shall be examined. Hanchot must have made his information since he arrived, for when I saw him he knew nothing, but that he dined at a *table d'hôte* and had plenty of money. I shall sift, but you will observe I meet with nothing but duplicity. All the trade has left the Downs ; wind north, and looks well.

[*Secret.*]

7th February.

Dear Markham,—The man Robb is come, and I send you Searle's letter respecting him. I find he is well known to many here, and some think him honest. He is a considerable shopkeeper and lived some time at Ostend. It is said he was confined during the late war by the French in Holland.

Shall I see him ?

FROM CAPTAIN SEARLE

Dear Stewart,—In the first place, I return the remarks of Mr. Dalrymple with Kirkaldie's observations on them. In the next place, the man (Robb) about whom I had an order, 29th January, to take off and not permit him to go ashore, is this day come on board from the Snipe gun-brig, under the name of John Brown.

It seems he has been for some time past employed by Sir Sidney to procure intelligence. He is a native of Scotland—of Dundee—and seems to possess a tolerable proportion of acuteness. He

was employed by Sir Sidney prior to his being captured by the *Zemeter*, and gives, as a reason for his being in the smuggler, that he was obliged to abscond from Holland as a suspected person. Did not his speech indicate his country, I should have taken him from his manner to have been a Paddy. He is certainly a clever fellow. One thing I am sure of, that Lord Keith should see him.

Now, according to the order I received about him, I can consider him in no other light but as a prisoner; and yet from the letter Sir Sidney wrote to the lieutenant of the *Snipe*, one would infer that he is not an enemy to his country. To me he appears somewhat of a similar character to Colonel what do you call him?—Sir Sidney's Egyptian friend: he draws tolerably; he speaks Dutch and French fluently, the former as well as a Dutchman.

The tenor of Sir Sidney's letter to Lieutenant Champion runs thus: 'Mr. R—— is the bearer of this. I should esteem as a favour if you would treat him with every degree of hospitality, and if ever you should be so unfortunate as to be shipwrecked on the part of the coast where he resides, you may depend on being amply repaid.' I hope his lordship will say how we are to treat him. At present he lives in the wardroom—I mean to-day, for he only came aboard this morning. He is certainly a *KNOWING* fellow.

I have nothing new to give you, but hope to see you soon.

Yours truly,
J. C. SEARLE

I send you a description of a schoot and a schooner. He pretends that there are a number of Englishmen about the French general at Walcheren, and that he became obnoxious to them.

8th February, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I have had Robb twice before me ; you see what he says ; he does not want sense, but his knowledge is confined to Flushing and Schouwen Islands. He did not account to me at the first conversation how he came away with the knowledge of the French general Monet, nor his means of return. He says M. Lashe, of Ostend, is a notorious French spy, and has privateers out. What can those fellows at Bergen mean ? I think Hudson's Bay. Ethalion will be thereabouts, and Amethyst is ordered to return to that coast, and convoys call for ships, but at this moment none can be spared from this point. All the bombs are ready, the Zephyr excepted, and I keep them so, and at no great distance. Captain Stewart is gone to look at Dunkirk.

When you build the new gun-brigs put bilge pumps in them ; the construction being so flat, when they incline much, the water cannot get to the well, and they are obliged to bale at the hatches. Could not the ships be furnished with a sort of forge to heat shot ? I took one in l'Aigle ; it stood in the head and was of iron. Nothing of the small shot from the ordnance yet.

I have seen a person who thinks the master of the cutter, Morrels, a doubtful character ; in fact, I am by no means satisfied of their intentions. What we get from them is of no value ; we know not what they may carry to the other side.

9th February, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I have discovered that Scraggs is mate of the Lord Nelson hired cutter, and was landed by Sir Sidney at West Cappel. He went to Robb at Flushing, whose wife sells tea and the

like to smugglers. Robb is a kind of agent for the smugglers, and goes a trip now and then.

Here is the *Raisonnable* in the Downs ; with so many wants she must go to the Nore, and then out as *Ruby* must come in. Perhaps you will like the *Repulse* or *Illustrious* to go, and *Raisonnable* to take up the ground of that which goes off the *Texel*.

10th February, 1804.

I have ordered out the *Hero* : *she* is not perfect and it is hard on Russell. Cannot you give him a permanent ship ? The *Winchelsea* might be spared. In the meantime I have sent the *Hermes*, and written to know what detains Captain Fanshawe at Shields. I send Owen's answer to a letter of mine. It would be a strong measure to seize the French in Norway, unless the northerners winked at it. I have sent orders to Campbell as you will see. It is clear all the information of the Knight comes from shopkeepers, and a mate of a cutter who may be good or bad for aught we know. I am sure they are ignorant of anything but the number of the boats, which I change every day, smuggling is so frequent. I have a letter from Lord St. Vincent, which shows his lordship never furnished Sir Sidney with any power of employing spies ; but this is exactly what he did before to artfully draw me into a civil expression, which he converted to his own use and endeavoured to persuade the Turks that he had the whole power, civil and military, and that I only commanded the fleet as he directed. The whole House are wrong in the head, and those who listen will be deceived ; such has long been the opinion of yours, &c., &c.

February 11th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—The *Ethalion* has conditional orders to go off Bergen if the Elbe freezes, and to

send the other ships to Yarmouth and Leith to refit.

It is difficult to prevent fire-boats in light winds in any other way but towing them off with our boats or preventing those in them from retiring, in which case they would not set fire to them ; we might have some old sloops or cutters fitted fire fashion and launches, as we talked of before.

I send you Admiral Thornbrough's letter, it anticipates every word I wrote to him only yesterday. He will be well with Hope for a time. Of the York I can form no conjecture.

[*Secret.*]

12th February, 1804.

Dear Markham,—Ben Lindsay, Banks's friend, is here. I send his information, such as it is ; but it costs nothing but a glass of gin, of which he had little need before he came to me. They had been landing the cargo all night. Here is Blackwood and the Rattler run foul ; I am quite vexed at their stupidity. It now blows a severe gale.

Enclosed.

[*Secret.*]

Went on an American vessel to Flushing and Rammekins. He left the latter on Tuesday last. Guards were placed on board the vessel all the time. He went privately on shore at Flushing, and saw about 200 vessels and boats in the basin. The troops were on board—about 100 in each ; more were expected from Rotterdam and other Dutch ports. He thinks Robb an honest man, but that he talks too much—says that he was in jail, but got off. The crew of the American vessel were not allowed to go into the basin, but he contrived to slip on shore himself, where he heard that on or soon after the 25 instant the invasion was to be attempted.

Nothing in Flushing roads; nor can they come out of the basin except at half flood. The troops are only permitted to land to shave or wash linen. This man arrived on this coast the 18th instant.

13th February, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I send you some information transmitted me by Sir D. Dundas—how far to be depended on I know not, but I am taking steps to find out. As you will observe, he throws odium on R. B. and others of Sir S. S.'s friends. Butcher is a Scot, and, although he lives at Folkestone, I am told he is now on the coast of Scotland under Prussian colours, and that he generally lands his cargoes near St. Andrews or Eyemouth as the winds suit.

Patton's letter is distressing. We are in the hands of those fellows; they must either be indulged or their charter taken away and a new list framed. As to masters, not one has had an acting order here but by the special application of the captains, and often the navy board having written they had none to appoint. A severe gale—God preserve all our ships! If the Brest fleet are ready and intend it they may sail. Billy will be blown to the westward in despite of his endeavours, and they have been not little during this vile weather.

Enclosed.

Deal, 12 February, 1804.

My Lord,—You may depend upon my taking every care about the water, and Mr. Oakley informs me he can supply on an average thirty tuns a day, as he proposed. It is the weather which prevents supplying. The launches loaded can only pass in moderate weather.

The Vulture and Speedy shall be despatched without pilots, but several will be wanting for the Arab, the Rattler, the Lynx, and whatever other vessels are to be upon the Ostend or Calais station. At present I see no prospect of obtaining the pilots which will be required. Besides the difficulty about pilots I have complaints of the masters being insufficient men, and in one case acting without having passed, and does not pretend to be acquainted with the station.

These are my difficulties, with which I trouble your lordship; I have others which I get over as well as I can. Disasters and complaints are innumerable, which take up every moment of my time. With great regard, I have the honour to be,

My dear lord,

Your obliged and obedient,

PHILIP PATTON.

14th February, 1804.

Dear Markham,—You will observe by the enquiry I have ordered how little pleased I am with the Euryalus; it is too provoking, and officers ought to be ashamed. I do not know that such an accident ever happened to me, and you know we used to make ships do all they ought, even in those days. I am glad to send you a good account of Aberlady Bay, which I had required because I doubted of its safety at times. I think this gale will give it a trial, and Hexty Bay too. Nothing can be more useful at the anchorages than troopers so long as they are not wanted for other service. It still blows very hard. I have sent for a list of the pilots and how employed. I have a letter from Sir Sidney, *said* to be written two weeks ago in answer to one of mine, in which I gave my opinion of the Whitstable transaction, he having complained of

the admiral and having opened his letters. I had pointed out that the first part of an officer's duty was to take care of his ship, &c., &c. I send you some information from a man I sent; he quitted T—— only yesterday. If he is not very intelligent you may be assured he is honest, for he is in my house.

I am at a loss what to think about laying up the vessels.

February 15th, 1804.

My Flushing friend tells me that on the day he left that place it was reported a cutter was lost on the coast near Catwyk, some drowned and some prisoners at the Hague; if so it must be the *Champion* cutter, Lieutenant Skinner.

It is now moderate, and I hear of no mischief on this side.

February 17th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—When Captain Stuart came from Dunkirk he landed at Deal and came here at night, when I was confounded to hear him say that the report at Deal was that Captain Honyman had asked my leave, and without giving him any reply he was superseded either by my request or by the admiralty. Nothing can be more false: I wrote Captain Honyman a public and a private letter by express in as kind terms as I could express, and I wrote to him the immediate attention the board had paid to his accommodation. Common sense must show any man the difference between a temporary acting order and a regular commission. I have seen nothing in the paper I take, but it is hard that kind acts should be rewarded by calumny. Stuart added that he heard that Digby had said he never

was to quit the *Leda* again, which he had no right to say if he did so. Captain Honyman ought to contradict the report. What a misfortune the king's illness is, and the prince I fear is in a bad way! He had something sudden; he is weak and low still.

I am glad Lord St. Vincent is better. Have you seen certain paragraphs in the '*Sun*' of the 11th? You can have little doubt of the quarter they came from; I have none.

February 17th, 1804.

Dear Sir,—I have got the papers respecting the pilots, and shall examine them after post.

Captain Stuart has had a good look at Dunkirk; nothing there of consequence. Boulogne is undoubtedly the place, and we must be as numerous as you can off that harbour and this coast.

I send you Captain Owen's letter; it is sensible, and I think small fire-vessels and the combustibles for boats should be provided. It is time. I never have seen fire-ships of use, but they may; we ought to leave nothing to chance. The *Galloper* rides at the north end of the sand by a cable; she was hailed, but the cutter could not hear the answer.

There are now vessels running along shore to the west, and ours firing at them.

Lieutenant Harris, who is here, and is named first of the *Raisonnable*, tells me is set down for a cutter or gun-brig. He has been master of a merchant ship, and well qualified for either.

19th February, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I rejoice the king seems so much better, and Lord St. Vincent so much re-

covered as to assist his colleagues at this important time.

I send you Captain Searle's letter in answer to mine about the chain at Boulogne, which I believe, because we see the boat and took it for a guard or look-out boat.

You see poor Thornbrough is ill, and I am in distress what to do. G——r is unfit; if I send out Russell, perhaps not much mended. Something must be done; Thornbrough is not to be lost.

I will send in fine weather *Illustrious* or *Raisonnable* off Boulogne. I am not afraid of that attempt, but they are certainly getting very numerous there. I will have a look at Ostend immediately. Owen will do nothing until I see or write him particularly.

I have read the paragraph; great part I do not comprehend, but that which I do is equally false as unjust to my knowledge. It all comes from the same place, and I am surprised how Lord Hawkesbury can be so imposed on. Admiral Patton had full power to have sent the *Raisonnable* to the Nore in the first instance (if found time must be gained), but he thought it unnecessary.

The *Carysfort* is pressing no ships in the Downs. I really see no alternative but Russell going out and hoisting his flag in the *Defence*. Hope is discreet, and has been long on the station. I shall direct the rear-admiral to be prepared, if the board send their orders to that effect.

19th February, 1804.

It is quite evident that the information of this day was touched up in the *Antelope*. As you will recollect, the last account from Lord Proby, the weather had been so bad nothing had been able to approach the coast. Whence then this astonishing vigilant blockade—excepting for the newspapers?

21st February, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I have ordered Sir Charles Hamilton to be off Brest again in south winds or fine weather. I am inclined to keep a certain force always in the Downs, considering it not impossible the Dutch ships of the line, with an east wind, might run off Boulogne and give protection to the small vessels over.

You will get the examination of Scraggs and Meanels, two common smugglers, ignorant, and by no means to be depended upon where their immediate interest is not concerned. I have the secret order : everything is as ready as possible, and myself too.

The worst of Boulogne for the great ships, is that it is not more than six miles from Banc de Baas to the Ridge, therefore it will be necessary to begin as soon as they are over Banc de Baas, and the others to meet them on this side the Varne. I am of opinion the fire matter may be of use, so might two or more small vessels, flat, fitted as fire-ships : example, on a beach or in little water to run among them before their troops were landed. I am happy to see the king is better, and am, &c.

Owen has got off very well ; the object was tempting, and had our ships been off Calais in due time when the wind changed more might have been stopped. I have directed my flagship to make the signal day or night on any change of wind or fair weather for ships to get under sail, and all the revenue cutters to wear vanes. They are apt to hide themselves.

Another of their transports brought in by Active. This is the second ; she was one of fifteen. It is well done ; seven of them were gun-boats with seventy soldiers in each.

22nd February, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I am sorry to hear two of our ships have been foul of each other off Grisnez, one has received damage; the Melpomene in like manner at Spithead. It is quite ridiculous these frequent accidents and must be want of common attention or from conceit. For the fire-vessels, some of these schuyts or French gun-boats can be got for a trifle (eighty or one hundred pounds) and might answer the purpose. Our ships have not suffered in their attacks much, and I have reason to believe the enemy do suffer considerably, and that the spectators on the shore look to the crossing with anxiety from what they observe under the most favourable circumstances. I recommend great caution, and in justice all the officers seem to feel and understand what is required of them on the great day.

The accounts of the king are most flattering and consolatory to all ranks. What think you of the three keeled ships to carry twenty mortars, two at Ostend, two at Bruges, but not yet ready?

Rowley volunteers to relieve Thornbrough.

February 23rd, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I send you the paragraph, but have not seen the other. I do not get the Oracle. If Honyman has any honour he will contradict it. If it is Captain Cochrane, you will find what I wrote from Egypt, that he is a crackheaded, unsafe man, and was one with others who endeavoured to stir up dissensions in the fleet; and I am sorry to find his nephew is falling into the same error—wrongheaded, violent, and proud. See his letter to-day about his officers. I reply I com-

manded a ship four years with only one lieutenant, and thought myself well off too.

The Dutch fleet will fall down to the Maas before they can attempt to quit the port. If the Boulogne flotilla sails, the large ships in the Downs would be off the Longsand End before them in any wind, but you may be assured that the force now in Boulogne, 6,000, being composed of a great many square-rigged vessels, cannot quit the harbour even in two tides ; and in any weather before such a collection can move, all the great ships will be in Boulogne road ; any east wind soon raises a surge on our coast. I send you a letter from Captain Wright to read ; he wants caulking after being a fortnight in the Downs, and I am writing to know the reason. It is surely well to have a number of the fire boxes here ; occasions may offer when officers might lay hold of fishing boats and convert them to fire-boats.

February 25th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I return you Mr. Tucker's letter. Nothing of the sort surprises me ; it has for years past been the uniform system to abuse and find fault with every superior whenever any request was denied, however absurd in itself ; and every day humorous conversation passes in every captain and lieutenant's talk, which they themselves would have construed into mutiny, sedition, insolence, &c., and hanged or flogged half their ships' companies for. But so it is with those who think too well of themselves and too ill of others ; I have been in the situation to feel it. I have sent two excellent mids, who have acted as officers but not confirmed, to Lord Cochrane. I have ordered the *Raisonné* (by a dragoon) to be completed and sent off in consequence of Russell's report of two line-of-battle ships standing into Yarmouth. I fear more

for the Flushing ships than for those off Brest in NW winds.

I thank Troubridge for appointing Lieutenant Stewart.

February 26th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I send you a plan of a fire-boat sent to me by Patton. I think well of it to send in among them if they bring their boats to the bay to embark their troops, which I incline to think they may, and which may be their ruin; the balloon and mortar business is more complex. I find the *Inflexible* was the second line-of-battle ship off Yarmouth. I hear of no harm among us in the late gales.

The Enclosed.

Transport Office, Portsmouth, February 23rd.

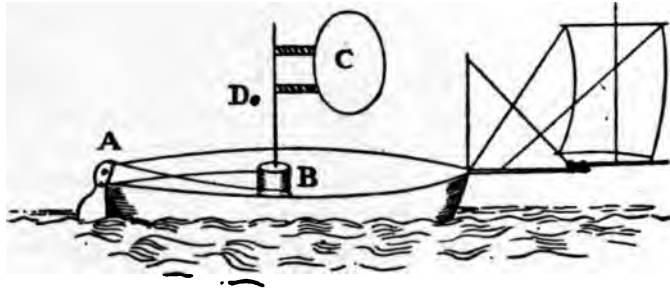
Dear P[hilip],—I did not think that my plan for burning the French shipping in Boulogne was to have met with so much attention. If it helps to bring the subject under serious consideration it will do some good.

I have not only turned the matter over and over in my mind, but I have made some experiments. I caused the office wherry to be fitted with a traversing foresail, as described to you in my last letter, and having brought her well by the stern, she sailed from the hospital wall to Southsea Castle, right before the wind, without a rudder or oars, and without broaching to, or even making large yaws. But in case this should not be sufficient, I have invented a method of making the wind assist in steering a vessel with no person on board of her, by making a flag of tin answer in some measure the purpose of a wheel in counteracting the tendency to yaw to either side. This I place forward in the vessel to prevent its ever acting as a mizen to bring her to.

This may perhaps be better understood by the following plan.

My figure is so ill-drawn that you will not understand it, and as it is nearly post hour I cannot make alterations.

A is intended to represent the head of the rudder, with a yoke upon it, from each end of which a line goes round the barrel B; the lines cross each other, that when the tin flag C turns with the wind, it may turn the spindle D, and with it the barrel B, which must move the rudder to counteract any deviation from a direct line before the wind. I



have fixed the sail forward, as I had it done in the wherry. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to make a vessel sail on any direct line, except before the wind, or perhaps with a slow motion by the wind—fore-sheet, for instance, to windward. I have thought of towing by a kite, balloon, &c., but have not time to explain, yet some use might, I think, be made of such inventions. Carcasses might be thrown from oak mortars, well iron hooped for one discharge, the distance not to be great, but sufficient to reach from the boom across the harbour, if there be one, in among the shipping in the basin, when the fire-vessel or any other should strike that, or even upon touching the ground; if they burst they

could do no harm, as the vessel would have no person on board. Six or eight such mortars might be fixed in each vessel.

The iron hoops should be very thick and strong ; the expense, should it succeed or not, could not be great ; the carcasses to consist of the most inflammable matter, kept together by iron hoops, and as light as possible.

Yours,
C. P.

[*Copy.*] Philip Patton.

2nd March.

Dear Markham,—I wrote your board yesterday on the conduct of Lieutenant Wilmot, who came from off Flushing, and could not fetch the Downs with a NE wind, but went to Dover and sent my letters by express, and demanded ordnance stores. Captain Stuart, who was at Dover on duty, delivered my orders for him (Wilmot) to come to the Downs or off Ramsgate, to receive despatches for Sir Sidney and Thornbrough ; but to my surprise he sent a dragoon with a letter to tell me he should return without doing so, and I am obliged to send another cutter [with] the packets. He is either mad or he has had some private instructions for his guidance.

Have you permitted the schooner of Sir S. S. to be refitted ? Captain Stuart saw her in Dover, and enquired if the men belonged to the Antelope. They answered ' No, they are not come up yet.' He thinks the men are employed [by] Captain Wright, who is holding a very odd language I hear. Is the Toulon fleet at sea or not ? I am apt to think much of our information is a superstructure raised upon the slender foundation of reports and probabilities. The Virginia is in a sad plight, and will require much time to refit.

[*Most private.*]

5th March, 1804.

Dear Markham,—It has come to my hearing that there has been much clamour about the issue of tea, and I took some pains to quash it, and things went on; but now they complain again, and of its quality, which is a pretence. Also that when they are ordered from the ship they cannot carry anything with them as they did cheese and butter; also that they were promised seven pounds of meat in harbour, and that they get but five. I was thinking whether boiled wheat one and barley another, with sugar or molasses, might not be an agreeable and wholesome change; turn it in your mind. Discontent is to be avoided, and there are plenty to blow the coal.

[*Most private.*]

March 6th, 1804.

I have been obliged to write Lord St. Vincent to-day, as Captain Wright's correspondence is all a cabinet secret. I receive an express every night from him containing nothing. I am of opinion his head is wrong; after being five weeks in the Downs, he has discovered all the vessels attached to that service are unfit, and goes about Deal and Dover threatening me with the secretary of state, and signifying the admiralty must do as he pleases. So long as he had only one vessel he discovered fleets of gun-boats every day, and that the officers neglected their duty; now that he has got proper vessels it is impossible to get him out. If his services are indeed necessary I wish the secretary of state would take up some vessels for him, for he is my torment.

His sloop is a remarkably fine one, and the Bonetta is just come down the river and is said to be one of the fastest of that tribe, which are not good. What dreadful accounts from Thornbrough,

and what an escape! there never was such weather to be sure.

6th March, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I enclose you a copy of a letter from Mr. Whidbey on the subject of an arsenal in the Firth, where the expense would be very small, and soon repaid in saving the expense on craft and time. Let the wind be how it may, there can only be a delay of two tides to get down to Leith road.

The Enclosed.

Woolwich Yard, February 28th.

My Lord,—Longannet¹ Point, near Kincardine, is composed entirely of freestone. About 300 yards from high-water mark, towards the river, is a bed of that stone that is seldom covered at high water; from thence to low-water mark is about 200 yards more, where docks may be made without excavating, by building stone piers to the lowest ebb and forming docks within them; which may easily be done, and with little expense, as all the materials are on the spot and can be easily obtained. The depth of water between low water and across to Carron River is about sixteen to twenty feet, the bottom a soft clay, after which, below, the water gradually increases in depth, and above it gradually decreases up to Kincardine, where it is very shoal at low water, the rise and fall of tide being twenty feet. Docks may be made to contain the larger ships, and frigates may lie very near the pier if built out to low-water mark, and receive their stores and water with ease and expedition, as the river here is always very smooth, and certainly has every advantage possible in making a small naval arsenal, excepting its being so

¹ See Allardyce's *Life of Lord Keith* (1882), p. 416.

far removed from the sea, if that may be considered as an exception. At all events any place must be better than Leith for naval equipment, and although the distance from Leith to Longannet is great, ships would, when they got there, be certain of their stores and water, but at Leith it always is and must be otherways.

(Signed) T. WHIDBEY.

March 11th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I find the *Amelia* and *Crescent* were run on shore in some attempt on some schuyts about East Cappel not worth their price. There seems a considerable force coming down the Seine. I have written to Captain Oliver to inform me if they are to be come at. They seem busy in Holland; I take that to be a feint; they will never trust 9,000 Dutchmen in one body.

Our ships are all off Boulogne at anchor; there has been some firing, but I have no report; of course it must have been of no consequence.

I rejoice to see the king is so well.

[*Secret.*]

March 13th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I have been employed this whole day in examining French persons, a man from Holland, and in listening to the Boulogne projectors, who have projected nothing but to put money in their pockets, and leave us to execute an ill-concerted plan.

Of the Trusty I shall fully inform myself; the captain mentioned carronades to me, but I told him he was intended for a troop-ship. The armed ships will be a great relief to me for the convoys. The Scourge and that tribe of vessels are of force sufficient for the Elbe and Weser a month hence. It is a deep and dangerous bight with NW winds;

they are wretchedly leewardly and are not fitted with bits and capstans, but they must do. The Inflexible will do at Leith, and the Glatton, a good ship, in the Downs or anywhere. Her style of arming is excellent for boats and small craft. I observe Mr. Pitt's notice, but I do not know if there is any intimacy in the quarter you mean, but it may be so. Boats will do no good on the enemy's coast, nor anything less than gun-brigs, cutters or schooners. It is reported Pichegru is taken near Treport—I hope not—and Admiral De Winter confined.

March 15th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I have reason to think Bonaparte is at Boulogne, and was at the ceremony of opening the new harbour at Wimille.

There have been discovered several shoals with three fathoms on them in the fair way from the Ness¹ to Boulogne between Banc de Baas and the Vergoyer. I would wish six cork buoys and small kedges to them; the buoys, not large, to be dropped on them and left to lead us to the spots to ascertain the size and depth and number, for they are very dangerous although small.

I am sadly distressed about convoys at this time, and must send some of the merchant sloops from hence to the Nore and Yarmouth. It cannot be expected that the hired ships can be ready for a time.

March 16th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—To-day you will get the report of the Trusty, which ship may be considerably increased in force, but must in that case go to Sheerness. Pray, might not she do for the Humber

¹ Dungeness.

and *Gelijkheid*¹ for the Downs station? At the moment it appears to me Boulogne is the place they intend to proceed from and Ostend; if so, Kent to a certainty is the object—Hythe or Westgate Bay. Their vessels are brigs, schooners, galliots, more than luggers. The last gun-boat has been a harbour launch, or that of a large ship of war, quite open. I shall order the *Chiffonne* to the Downs, but I fear we shall be tormented by privateers on the coast of Norway. You will observe the report on the *Pluto*; all of those vessels seem to have been ill-inspected. The best of the boats must go out to cruise; now the weather gets better they keep up numbers.

Queenborough cutter found unfit.

[No date.]

Dear Markham,—We have plenty of the combustible now; am sorry you complain, but the weather has been changeable. I have seen Captain Wright in the dumps. I have long foreseen what has at last happened; he has never wanted anything in reason, and all Lord Hawkesbury asks was done two days before his request came here. You see there are constant complaints of those merchant-built sloops.

March 18th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—My whole time is taken up by this Boulogne business, which shall not stop with us, despicable as it is.

The *Utrecht* and *Gelijkheid* are both good ships for the Downs and any short service; the *Repulse*, a most useful ship either for here or Flushing. The carronades render such ships strong, they throw shot better than I expected.

¹ A prize taken at the battle of Camperdown.

The charts of this part of the sea will be of great use if correct, and I think Durban would be of service because he is skilful and would have nothing else to attend to, for there are some very dangerous lumps unknown hitherto west of the ridge and nearer the French coast, three and four fathoms at low water. I fear the Owers to be loose bad ground. In the public letter more revenue cutters are mentioned than I have ; those at Sheerness are intended for the river service, small, and no guns, but useful, and active men in them to run with orders, &c. ; here they are skulkers when they can. Once we get the convoy ships and a regular routine settled we shall do very well with the trade, but at this moment, coming upon me all at once, with so many cripples, some absent, and all the commanders calling out for men, it distressed me ; boats and gun-brigs cannot be sent distant. I have an inconvenient complaint on my breast of some standing, but I hope to hold out and have put a blister on it.

The French continuing to mount guns and mortars is all I have from Boulogne ; this wind will bring in the squadron.

March 19th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—You see the captains are all offended at my ordering the signal for them to quit the Downs, and are applying for courts-martial. In future I will save them that trouble by putting them under an arrest when they linger on the road longer than they ought. I send you Oliver's letter respecting Hamm. I think this east gale is likely to end the stone ship expedition by the vessels going on shore, to the great joy of the projectors and profit no doubt. I hear they cost 5,000*l.* a ship and are not worth 500*l.*, and no one thing in them.

Illustrious, March 20th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—Only three of the revenue cutters of Scotland are officered and under my command. At the Nore there were four very small, two guns and a few men ; no officers, too, were taken away.

In the Downs six were under Thornbrough, I believe, but never had any orders ; they are good vessels, but not officered, and do not like to go to the other coast.

N.B.—One of the captains is worth 60,000*l.*, keeps his carriage, &c.

At Yarmouth none of these have any officers in them and are used to carry despatches. It is of great consequence to get men of good temper to go in them ; I have infinite trouble with them in the hired cutters, constant disputes. I am among them every day to hasten them out of port. Virginia will do well enough for the Downs or Margate by-and-by ; a fortnight will show us what they intend. I am obliged by your good wishes, but it will not do to keep indoors. I take all the care I can ; a blister has done me good. There is a violent gale, the [fire] ships are on the west side of the Ness.

March 21st, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I hardly think the bombardment of Hamm an object unless an invading force was collected there. Banks deserves something. I am collecting the time he has been employed. I shall be glad to see Durban ; it is of consequence we should know our ground. I am confident the slower ships have had all the attention possible even if it had been a plan of my own. Still shocking weather and very cold.

March 23rd, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I am glad Lord Hobart is contented, I have done what I could for it. Durban is not yet arrived, but I will settle with him about vessels, &c. I did hear that Captain Essington had been over towards Boulogne, and had returned reporting on the armament there, but he is a weak and muddling creature with whom I never hold any communication ; of the vice-admiral I hear little but of his schemes, and know nothing of his sentiments nor of those with whom he lives, and of those men immediately about the place. I have seen nothing of late, not having been in society these two months, and throughout the day I am employed, but I am told there is a cry of want of small vessels. What is it Sir James Pulteney would be at ? has he not had ships sent there until they have been cast away ? If he can find a harbour I will send ships to it, but it is impossible to make ships anchor on a coast to be lost, but Sir James with good sense has no determination nor means of explanation to others. Here is the signal for the enemies' small vessels being off Calais. It is calm. The squadron at anchor off Boulogne.

Durban is come and I send him with the necessary documents.

March 23rd, 1804.

Dear Markham,—You will observe the French sent seventy vessels out yesterday's tide, but to what end I cannot guess, unless to defeat our store ships, or perhaps cover some convoy which may be creeping along ; however I took all due precaution. I have a long paper sent me by Sir D. Dundas, said to be sent to him, complaining of want of vessels on the coast and of the orders given ; it is

full of falsities and some nonsense, one or two good observations. I have made my remarks and sent it back.

27th March, 1804.

Dear Markham,—When at Dover yesterday Captain Essington told me he had sent the express to London, at which I expressed my regret. I looked at the harbour mouth, and recommend a chain and seven guns to be placed where it is open. Sir D. Dundas was there and agreed with me, and I have written to Mr. Pitt, who has charge of the harbour, before I write publicly.

I am provoked beyond measure about this constant running foul. Virginia must go to the Nore. I understand Captain Maling was very indiscreet to run in a gale of wind, so as to overlay two or three ships and damage one. Here is, to add to it, one of the storeships fallen on board a gun-brig—Jackal—and damaged both. I wish that business was at an end; it is a millstone about my neck.

The French vessels have suffered some damage it is believed and lost all their anchors. You will observe they are sending a force to their new harbours at Wimille and Ambleteuse; had the wind been more to the west they would all have been lost.

Here is Captain Graham lost two anchors in Westgate Bay, and cannot find them in six fathoms water, although close to the Texel [guard-ship]. What a damned set they are!

30th March, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I came back last night and got yours. I am sorry for Goree;¹ it is a kind of insult. Is not Fleeming that way? He and the

¹ Captured by a French squadron on January 18; recaptured by the *Inconstant* on March 7.

Inconstant might recover it. I have not heard of any captures of late off Beachy. The Welsh ordnance vessel, I imagine, is one who neglected the convoy; I suspect that branch to be ill-managed, expensive, and very refractory. Blackman on his last cruise was off Scilly and as far as the Naze of Norway, in the North Sea. It is little luggers and cutters which come to the back of the sands frequently. The Curlew is off Beachy and the Autumn off Hastings; the Charlotte will continue there. I had no immediate plan in view when I hinted to Lord St. Vincent the fire-ships, but moments may occur when it would be a pity not to have them; they will be better prepared in the river or at Chatham. None of the line-of-battle ships or large frigates cross the Varne or Ridge; there is always a great sea on them. Hamilton is well cautioned only to remain at anchor in east winds and fine weather, and to make sure of an anchorage by night either in the Downs, Boulogne, or the Ness. Durban had not been off, but was at Lydd they told me at the Ness. Captain Morris writes me he is all ready for him. The Autumn has had an unlucky shot; her captain is an excellent officer. They had very nearly succeeded in beaching them all; 400 yards more run would have done it—so Captain Adam writes me. I send you Banks' letter. D. Osmond I know, and Madame De Bergne is his daughter. I know nothing of his principles; he is very clever and was about the royal family. Mrs. Leigh is the former wife of General Leigh,¹ Admiral Byron's daughter.

¹ General Charles Leigh married the Honourable Frances Byron. She was aunt of Lord Byron, the poet.

March 30th, 1804.

I am sorry to inform you the store squadron all are returned to the Downs this instant.

The information of the American from Fécamp must be exaggerated.

March 31st, 1804.

Dear Markham,—The bombs are all at hand, and such as are fixed in can be ready in a moment. I send you information got from Maitland; perhaps he did not think of sending it to the board. Where can they be gone? Perhaps to throw more into Martinique or Guadaloupe. How soon will any of the armed ships be ready? The *Stately* has all the lower deck guns in but four, and her quarter-deck guns were taken out for the *Kent*'s use before she sailed. The ship is good on the bottom and sails fast.

The *Braakel*¹ is tight in her bottom; has only 12-pounders on the upper deck; none below. She is bad in the upper works and a very bad sailer; dangerous on a lee shore; used seldom to stay. Might do for a stationary or flagship.

I have ordered the *Lynx* to Norway. I have nothing fast in the North Sea, the *Scorpion* excepted, and cannot well take her from Thornbrough at this time. She is so useful to him that Norway coast will require another frigate, a sloop, and cutter, now the north trade opens, and that about Archangel.

I am taking the water out of the *Trusty* before she leaves the Downs.

March 31st, 1804.

Captain Maitland, of H.M. ship *la Loire*, in a letter to Captain Stewart, dated at sea 20th March,

¹ A Dutch prize.

writes that a few days before that date he had captured a ship called the *Brave* of St. Malo, carrying fourteen guns (12-pounders) and 110 men. He does not mention the date of the *Brave's* leaving the port of L'Orient, but says the day she left it two 74's and two frigates left it under secret orders. They had a few troops on board ; not above 1,000 in all.

Dear Markham,—Lord Howick told me of the Baltic convoy, and the orders went the day before yesterday, excepting that not to molest Prussians ; I suppose you mean within the Baltic. The convoy on the 22nd is to be escorted by two ships, which are to go into the Baltic, one to Riga and one to another Baltic port—to continue eight days, and then return to Elsinore, and so in succession. I write a note to Rowley not to meddle with Prussians within the Baltic, which you may send if you like.

April 1st, 1804.

Dear Markham,—You will observe that all measures have been taken against the privateers to the westward, and that the ordnance ship is lost. What could induce a ship of that value to run without convoy ? I send you a letter from Lieutenant Strutt, who is well mentioned by Captain Oliver.

April 6th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—What we shall want immediately is a small squadron for the rivers in blockade, which must be renewed by proclamation and notice to ambassadors, &c. I hope you are not building any more of the small sloop brigs. They do not answer ; all complain they are wet, do not sail, and drew twelve feet ; the large brigs are excellent. I have sent out in all directions, and am, &c.

170 *LETTERS TO ADMIRAL MARKHAM*

Have they not forgot Emden and the Em? That and the Scheldt are the great inlets to all foreign supplies; the latter to the very centre of France.

April 7th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I have no cause to suspect anything wrong in our ships, but cannot help being on the watch after what I have seen; there can be no more unwholesome food than butter and cheese in the rancid state they must of course be, but beef, butter, and grog are the idols of Englishmen. I am sure the grain I mentioned when boiled is more nourishing and wholesome, if they would eat it, and that made me mention it. I sent for some of the tea and send it to you. I am sorry for Milne; he was an active fellow but must have been mad at that moment. The twelve ships seen by the Swede I take to be India ships, unless you know that some of the enemy have slipped out, and their being of the line must be nonsense.

Here I understand Sir S. S. in another battle, but I have not yet heard it officially. It is not a bad one, Captain Wright saying at Deal Admiral Patton had behaved in such a manner as would induce him to recommend him to the secretary of state. His head is quite turned!

Ramsgate, 11th April, 1804.

Mr. — arrived from Zerickzee at Deal on the 9th, and has been sent to Sir Sidney Smith with whom he communicates. He says that on the 22nd ultimo, Du Berne, the landlord of the St. Luke at Amsterdam, to whom he had letters, was taken up and sent to Paris, and that a Mr. Muschel, to whom he also had letters, is in hiding, and the police in quest of him.

He says that when he went to the post office at Amsterdam to enquire for letters, he found that things were blown ; that he immediately fled and secreted himself nearly three weeks.

He affirms that Douglas, Parker, Tumper, and Luke, of Whitstable, communicate with Mrs. Wicks, of Flushing, who is in fee with the French general.

Ramsgate, April 13th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I am sorry the gun-brig is going away. I was thinking to call them all in when I could send cutters to cruise on our coast, but there seems no help for it.

The boats I mentioned are such as carry a mortar or two, but decked over, and to be rowed by thirty oars ; they might approach and retire from the shore in moderate weather without being seen, and easily brought off. Lateen or schooner sails are best because they hold less wind taut. I think the plan for the marines excellent ; at Elsinore they may get more. I shall write Durban. I did so yesterday ; he wanted a sextant. Captain Morris thinks the First Consul is at Boulogne and a great bustle there.

April 13th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I have not a word of where the storeships are I know leaks, but I dare say the projectors wish them anywhere but on Boulogne Bar. As the Virginia has left the Nore I have sent for the Chiffonne and to carry some hawsers to the Amethyst. Of the Helder I know nothing, but think she will do for the Humber. For large ships we are well off unless the whole French fleet come, and then I shall try to secure the anchorage at least. The Veteran is to go to Dungeness whenever the Ardent comes up. Off Beachy we have

chased four privateers, but the bought sloops cannot catch them. The Kingfisher may do; the Harpy wants decking, sails abominably. So does the Monarch; it is supposed the false keel and copper is off the bottom, having grounded on the moorings in Chatham for a year, and thirty-six feet of the keel being found on the marshes; the ship used to sail and steer well. The French camps increase; they work by torchlights and are making roads down the cliffs.

[*Private.*]

April 15th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—You may rest assured the French intend to embark their men and guns without the piers, ranged round the bay with stern fast to the shore. It will require three days to bring out all the vessels out of the harbours; of course impossible for men to sit or stand all that time on decks or cramped in open boats. The risk is great, no doubt, for if the wind blows on shore they may all be cast on shore, but even there they only lose their boats but save the soldiers and the guns. The Dutch brigs and schooners are said to be very fine vessels, carrying six 18 in the waist, two 24 in the bow, some of them larger. There are also large galliots which are strong but sail ill. The square-rigged vessels will attempt to cover the row-boats and luggers; they are too large to be run down and will be very numerous; I think I may say from Boulogne 200; but it is impossible to count them from the situation in which they are placed, all their bows back to the harbour's mouth.

I wrote last night to hasten everything from the Nore, and the ships in the Downs are ready to unmoor. I shall leave Admiral Patton at Deal

when I go out, that the general correspondence may not be at a stand. I sent to Sir Sidney Smith to get out as soon as possible.

The Kingfisher waits for officers; none yet joined but the captain.

April 17th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—As the wind is at NNE I hope some of the Frenchmen may go on shore if their tackle is not good. Here is my friend Wright run the Vincejo on shore and knocked her up. I do not exactly know if the Atalanta was well defended or not. By the limitation of 100 prisoners and her crew being stipulated for, may not it be that the Dutch, or rather French, intend persecuting them by pretending treachery?

The reports from Ostend are so contradictory, I shall send Captain Stewart to look in there, and Dunkirk too.

18th April.

Dear Markham,—The weather has been so bad as to permit of little communication with the Downs since Sunday, and nothing from Boulogne yesterday. I am told Sir Sidney has been complaining of you to the Patriotic Society, but that they laid the letter aside. What will not vanity make men do even where there is sense! I am sorry to hear the Rocket is too bad for Yarmouth. I understand there is a house at Deal to be got for 1,000*l.* and that 600*l.* would put it in order; it stands on the shore and would answer well for the admiral on the station, the expense not much, but if government looks at it they will ask more money for it, perhaps 1,500*l.*

20th April.

I am well provided with naval hints. I told them they were all nonsense long ago ; it is some one patronised by Sir J. Sinclair I guess. I am not very well to-day, but, &c.

24th April, 1804.

Many thanks, my dear Markham, for your note. I want a good fiery one of them here for the Dunkirk and Ostend business ; my present is but slow, he would do the harbour work well enough. Flushing seems no longer a place of invasion, only preparation. You will be sorry to see Ariadne chased that privateer four times, but could not catch her. His ship is not hurt, nor any killed by the batteries. I will send the Kingfisher there to try her sailing. I am infinitely obliged by your attention to Milne and send his letter. Lord St. Vincent made him ; he is a handy seaman. I am not yet well, but better, my head less afflicted, which it is when my stomach goes wrong.

I am, with every congratulation to you and Troubridge, &c.

I am going to put a gang of hands into a fast revenue cutter and try and pick up this Dieppe fellow.

I am much afflicted to hear of the loss of the Apollo¹ and ten merchant ships.

1st May, 1804.

Dear Markham,—All the revenue cutters wait officers and orders. I sent a list of them some time ago. The Swallow and Hound are in the Thames by orders from the board ; they stay at Rye doing nothing.

¹ Wrecked on the coast of Portugal on the 2nd April. See *N.R.S.* xxiv. 299.

I fear Durban has not done much yet ; I send you his last letter. I rejoice the gun-brigs are in a fair way, they are extremely useful among the sands. The Charlotte schooner is still at Portsmouth, at least has not been here yet. My letter of the 26th last month points out the places where the cutters are ; they can all be disposed of as the board thinks proper.

May 8th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—There were no vessels out of Boulogne except the usual number, and I hear Morris cannot give any information as to the number possible to come out on one tide because we have never seen it tried ; the only thing like an attempt the wind changed, and many with sails loose stopped short. What keeps Lewis so long ? I am much obliged by the board's attention and the commissions, particularly the manner the letter is expressed. I have written Admiral Rowley to send men to the new gun-brigs so as to get them out as soon as possible. Kingfisher is pressing and her orders is in the flagship, of course will not anchor in the Downs.

May 10th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—I thought of running off the Texel in the Monarch, but if the Brest fleet is to come out an east wind will do for both. At Boulogne there is little to be seen ; 150 of all sorts out but no troops in them. I have sent to order the Gelijkheid to be ready at a moment, to Vashon to keep out small cruisers, equally so from Hosely Bay. I should hope if the French do come up the Channel we shall be able so to collect as to defeat them ; at all events I think they shall not get the anchorage, and if they anchor on their own

side what think you of some more fire-vessels where the tides are so rapid?

This is a fine moment to be jangling about ministers!¹

I hope the orders to the western signal posts are clear, and in case of thick weather to run expresses to the Ness and to town by dragoons.

13th, 1804.

Dear Markham,—The lieutenant of the St. Vincent cutter writes me he has only twenty men, and that the master is taking no pains to get more, nor will the owners let her come here where men are to be had because as he says the owners are in hopes the new admiralty will send her to the Mediterranean, for which they are making interest. Is not Middleton somewhat old now for a young lord?

The revenue cutters do nothing, and their boards protect them in idleness.

¹ The Addington ministry resigned on May 15th, 1804.

FROM ADMIRAL B. S. ROWLEY

Sheerness, April 18th, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I am very sorry my account of the *Blanche* was not sufficiently explicit, but I wished to acquaint you the real state of her after receiving the *Helders*, which leaves her ten P.¹ and A.B.,² twenty-nine ord.³ and twenty L.M.⁴ short, in addition to the twelve that all frigates of her class are directed to sail short, making in the whole seventy-one; I therefore requested you to say how many more she was to have, that she may get them immediately and be ready to sail when paid on Tuesday. The *Beaulieu's* men, sixteen in number, were lent her to bring her down the river, and I have ordered them to the *Zealand*, intending to give her prest disposables, as they were only supernumeraries, as stated in the *Blanche's* weekly account. The *Glatton* is arrived at Gillingham and will be very soon ready after the arrival of the *Utrecht*. I did not receive the telegraph message yesterday about the convoy; I therefore suppose you have sent the necessary orders to Yarmouth. The *Hecla* will furnish about twenty-four P. and A.B., ten ord. and three L.M. Pray do you wish the *Thrasher* and *Rifleman* to have the preference to the different vessels at the Nore, all of which are perfectly ready except men? The *Howe* will be manned the moment she arrives at the Nore, and I have written to Admiral Stanhope for the number she is short that there may be no delay.

¹ Petty officers.

³ Ordinary seamen.

² Able seamen.

⁴ Landsmen.

I feel particularly obliged to you for your kind expressions about the Halifax command, and flatter myself when you have an opportunity you will serve me. Captain Searle deferred asking for a few days' leave with the hopes of getting the Monarch to the Nore, where she now is, if you can comply with his request. Had we men she might be at sea in forty-eight hours. I am, dear sir,

Your faithful and obliged

B. S. ROWLEY.

Sheerness, Sunday, 4th.

My dear Sir,—Notwithstanding the blowing weather they are working hard in hopes of getting the Antelope ready by Saturday next, but I fear she will require an additional day or two. The Troubridge (hired armed ship) has just arrived, intended by Lord Keith to go with the Baltic convoy on Tuesday, but from the bad account of her captain she is not fit for any service. I have sent his letter to the board that you might give such orders as you judge best. They certainly are a most enormous expense without much utility, and I am happy to think they are almost all discharged from the service. I have written to know if the Fancy may go with the Tonningen trade, which is ordered on the 7th by Lord Keith, but no ship arrived for that purpose. Previous to the receipt of the board order I had told Captain Matson no rigging could be lifted without their lordships' permission. The Jalouse's men are arrived at the Nore. How do you wish them to be disposed of? As soon as the weather moderates we shall begin to man the Monarch, and will then tell you how we get on. Half the Jalouses I shall order to the Bellette agreeable to your letter, and you will have the goodness to send down the order for that purpose. I shall be much obliged to you to

send the enclosed to my brother when an opportunity offers.

I am sorry to find Strachan has returned without Prince Jerome. It would give general satisfaction to see one of the illustrious family in England, as they never can come there except as prisoners.

Sheerness, May 6th.

My dear Sir,—The Satellite will be well enough manned with the Hecla's and six additional L.M. which are ordered, and on Saturday will I hope be ready for sea. Bellette will require a few L.M. from the Zealand with the Jalouse's watch. The others, I think, will very soon get the Skylark down from Chatham, and the moment Hope, to whom I have written, says she can receive men I will send them up. The men belonging to the Arab that came in the prize are very bad, as also the Topazes, but I have sent them to assist Theseus, and I hope to get her in a few days to Long [Reach].¹ I am sorry to say the yard officers declare the Antelope will not be ready till Saturday se'nnight; I have repeatedly told them how much she was wanted. I am very happy to hear Linois is laid hold of; I wish brother Jerome may follow him, and I trust somebody is keeping a sharp look out after him. When your arrangements are before the board I flatter myself this will be made a separate command, which I promise you Gambier writ me word was fully the intention of the last board as well as Lord Melville. It certainly appears strange that I should receive duplicates of admiralty orders on the following day from Lord Keith, which must and does frequently happen.

P.S.—I wish the lieutenants would be more alert in joining. You see the numbers that the ships here are short of, which delays their refitting.

¹ The word is covered by the seal.

Sheerness, July 6th.

My dear Sir,—I have despatched a trader with thirty harbour duty men to the *Pegasus*, and orders to send immediately all the P.'s, A.B. and ord. to the *Theseus*, after which I shall be able better to judge how many she wants, but I fear without a haul at the Malabar we shall not be able to complete her. The *Swift* was very lately docked and is, of course, equal to the convoy service for this summer, and as much longer as you find it necessary to keep those purchased tools in the navy. My complaint to Lord Keith of Captain Wright¹ was his having brought home thirteen logs of mahogany in his betwixt decks, which he modestly told me was for ballast (a new mode of seamanship), but, worse than all, they were publicly advertised for sale by Mr. Batten at Chatham; also some pecuniary concerns which were not much to his credit, and will for ever prevent my asking him to my table. So much I told the commander-in-chief when he was going to London, and the commissioner informed Lord Howick of it. I thought this my duty as the half pay list is very numerous, and amongst the number some deserving officers.

By the late reports of the *Etna* she will be paid off; if so I beg to submit whether her crew would not man two or three of the schooners with the addition of some L.M. if you wanted that kind of vessel, and Owen or Russell might find out their good or bad qualities. I fear few of the lieutenants have been in schooners before, only one of those yet joined.

I have directed Ball to put Mr. Driffield into the clerks' office, but he gives a sad account of his abilities and says he writes a very bad hand, but whatever your wishes are shall be attended to. Your

¹ John Wright, commander of the *Swift*, just returned from Honduras Bay.

letter expresses a surprise at the *Theseus* being short, but if you will refer to the weekly account you will there see it stated as in my letters. I feel much obliged for your intended kindness to Lieutenant Stephens. I will direct him to send another memorial, as it appears he has already written to the board his claims.

The Rifleman appears very bad. Her defects, if correct, will reduce her to Rotten Row.

Sheerness, July 10th.

My dear Sir,—*Theseus* has taken all the disposable A.B. and ord. from the *Zealand*, and without the assistance of *Malabar* I know not how we can complete her to the short, as she now wants fifty-two P. and A.B. and fifty-nine ord., and I have already given her fifteen L.M. more than the scheme (in lieu of ord.). The *Emerald* I should think might proceed immediately to the *Humber*, as she wants only thirty-two P. and A.B. and thirty-three ord., and if you approve of it I could send down thirty harbour duty men to the *Romulus*, and the latter ship might discharge ten A.B. and the same number of ord. into the *Emerald* in lieu of them, which would make her sufficiently strong to cruise in this season; for the home-bound convoys, out of which she might easily complete. Several of the schooners are down, and if you thought proper one or two of them might lie in Leigh roads and the lower part of the *Hope* and get manned—the harbour duty men being fully sufficient to carry them there. I fear they are very much over-masted, but the first tolerable day I propose trying them, and will let you know the results. No news yet of Mr. Congreve and his mortar vessel. The papers gave some idea of peace, but the guards being ordered to Sicily does not look much like it.

I wish I had sufficient interest to command the expedition, but no such good luck. I suppose that honour is for the great Sir Sidney or Purvis.

The Naiad undocks Wednesday next, but the shipwrights will not have finished her for three or four days afterwards, by which time I flatter myself she will be perfectly ready for sea. The Amelia will complete Argo if you approve of it, and as the season is good she might be useful, and in the winter get a few weeks in port to recruit those that show symptoms of scurvy or yellow fever. I suppose Argo will carry some of the troops out to Sicily. I am told (though not officially) that the Zealand begins to complain very much. If so, I should put her in sufficient repair to resume her present situation, as she never can be wanted to go to sea. Pray if Theseus is going to Portsmouth, could not Montagu furnish her ord. and Malabar the A.B., by which means she might sail in a very few days? These large ships take a long time to man without the aid of a line-of-battle ship to pay off.

Sheerness, July 27th, 1806.

My dear Sir,—The Argo wanted eight A.B. of the short, I have therefore directed that number to be discharged from the Hindostan, the last of the list, of course, it having been an invariable rule with me to prevent picking.

The only reason I have for saying Sir Sidney stands no chance for Rochester is from various reports I have heard that the freemen are very dissatisfied with him, and I am thoroughly persuaded, if Calcraft don't stand I could with ease come in, but I prefer Queenborough if it can be managed. From experience I know time ought not to be lost if Lord Howick is inclined to put anybody in. When Sir Richard King canvassed I went

round with him, added to which I lived there at Rochester two years and upwards. Of course am well acquainted with many of the leading people.

The chaplain of the Zealand is thoroughly acquainted with my application of his removal to the Ardent, and you know full well it has always been allowed to all captains to have their own, but before I wrote to you I took care to get a ship (the Ardent) of equal state, where the captain was desirous of having him.

The Shannon has got to Gillingham, but the want of seamen will detain her a little, as I have been obliged to take the Naiads away. Active will sail as soon as the court-martial ordered is over. My report of the Tremendous goes to-day, and it does not appear that any blame can be imputed to Captain Osborn. I will give the schooners all the trial we can at the Nore, but the navy board have replied to my letter by saying no alteratives can be made. There is a charming brig (the Emulous) at Chatham, if you wish her for one of your followers. I am, dear sir, &c.

I have just heard from Mr. King, of the treasury, saying the pressure of business has prevented my letter respecting Queenborough being shown to Lord Grenville, but he will take the earliest opportunity of doing it.

FROM VICE-ADMIRAL RUSSELL

3rd March, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I hope I need not tell you that I am rejoiced at finding you in your old berth again, and our chief in play, although I esteem one or two of the last board very sincerely.

Have the goodness to turn in your mind whether it would not be a most desirable measure to *send* the money to pay the ships to Yarmouth. The naval storekeeper here will pay them for the odd halfpence that is now a perquisite of pay clerks. The risk of sending large ships through a critical passage to the Nore is considerable. The time lost may eventually be of a serious nature.

I beg my best compliments to all our friends near you, and am with respect and esteem,

Most truly yours,

T. M. RUSSELL.

Yarmouth Roads, 25 April, 1806.

My dear Sir,—When I said that I wished the direct channel through the Haaks was open, I had the service you mentioned in contemplation; for except at high spring tides there is little water over them. The two others are guarded—the north by two armed vessels, the south by four batteries close to the water. They are moored in very open order.

They are aware of the enterprising disposition of our people, and to be foiled in what the enemy would call an insidious stratagem of war would be inglorious. Should this passage open to admit the squadron in, in broad daylight, I should hold their Helder cheap, and bring them out or destroy them, and it is opening. It is the general opinion that Verheuil¹ with three-fourths French sailors and officers will come out and give battle.

I dare say that when the Dutch are more ostensibly commanded by the French you will adopt a less lenient warfare with the Texel. It will be good policy to show the world that we are virtuously rancorous against the French. I beg pardon for wandering from the subject of your letter. You may be assured that I shall think most seriously upon it.

Thornbrough showed me the result of his enquiries on that scheme when it was proposed to him, and the obstacles appeared to him insurmountable; it is true the opening through the Haaks has happened since, and if it mends will make it possible, yet, *only* possible.

Yarmouth Roads, 29 April, 1806.

My dear Sir,—The Majestic reached the Nore on the 23rd, and her captain wrote me word that she would be paid on the 26th. She is not yet arrived, therefore must suppose that they did not pay her even then. Indeed, the expense of 40*l.* pilotage, the risk of groping from hence to Sheerness, and the incalculable evils which may result from the absence of a man-of-war from her station, are to me painful reflections. I mentioned before that the storekeeper here will pay as many ships as you please, for the odd halfpence kept by the clerks

¹ The reputed father of Napoleon III.

as a perquisite. Why it is [not] stopped is, I fancy, a question that some sailor may soon ask.

The Majestic knocked her rudder off this time twelvemonth returning from being paid at Sheerness, and I am this moment labouring under some of the pains of hell about her. God bless you! Go on with a reformation of the abuses that shock us.

Off the Texas, 31st May, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I enclose the report of the Hoop schuyt, by which you will find that she was bound with her salt fish to the common mart, Rotterdam; not one of them will own he knows where the salt came from, but say they found it on board her at Embden.

The fact is that she is Dutch, covered (like hundreds more) by Prussian colours; that honourable *ruse de commerce* is now descended to her neighbour Denmark, who has descended to take it up upon an extensive scale. Indeed, these seas are already covered by new Danish colours. I have directed several English pilots to let me know the names of such Prussian ships as have, to their knowledge, got Danish papers lately. The discovery will not avail, so we must affect a necessary gullibility until she, in her turn, breaks the peace. I am delighted with the mission you have honoured me with respecting the Dutch fishermen, and think you will approve of my first sounding them as if without any authority, but from (what I really feel) pity and benevolence. The officers to whom I have suggested it, and who are to speak to them, do not know but that it is a thought of my own only.

I think it right that you should all know that the emigration from Switzerland to America is remarkably great. I found forty persons, composed of eight families, in one ship; two or three more had these

kind of passengers. Business finished, I now only add that now I am evolving, and fishing, to, I suppose, the great amusement of our brother officer Kekkart. Do you know that *Kekkart* is frog in Dutch? No, but you know that proves the antiquity of his family. His great ancestor Nicholas was the personage celebrated by Swift in, I believe, the 'History of John Bull Amphibious,' and, great as he is, I wish we had him out.

I congratulate you on the swinging you gave that *malheureux* Jeffrey, and confess I envy you the occasion, the defender of a hero, if ever man deserved the title.

16th January, 1807.

My dear Markham,—I believe all the Danish captain says. You see Bonaparte is not on 'a bed of roses,' and that to ingratiate himself with his subjects, the poor devil King Louis works as a custom-house officer.

Ruby's captain complains of her making water (2 feet an hour nearly). That scoundrel pilot has given her a diuretic with a vengeance, and I should be tempted to give him one, by a short suspension by the neck if he ever runs another aground.

You see I have not yet availed myself of the board's indulgence of a fortnight's leave. I have not seen either the new Instructions or Navy Lists; if they are out, have the goodness to order them to be sent to, &c.

FROM ADMIRAL VASHON

Leith, 4th February, 1806.

My dear [Sir],—Before I write an official letter to the board I will endeavour to obtain some further information on the subject of another demand being made on the fishermen, and other protected men, and of the best means to adopt for the purpose of rendering it successful.

The people furnished to the service at the beginning of the war from the Orkney Islands were many of them objectionable, and some of them were returned from the Nore as unfit for the service. I therefore suggested to you the appointment of a regulating officer as a means to obviate that evil, in the event of another demand being made on the inhabitants of that quarter. Lieutenant Scott certainly has not made any great figure by his services last year, and he represents the want of a small tender as the cause of his failure, for without it he has not any means of securing the men he gets hold of. There has not any demand been made on the fishermen on any part of the coast of Scotland except in the Firth of Forth, and from thence to the northward to the Moray Firth. From the small fishing towns along the Berwick coast a demand should be made, and likewise from the northern and western coast, and the islands. In the latter case some difficulty may be expected, but an application to the magistrates may

have a good effect ; and some officers who know the country may be employed in the revenue vessels stationed on the coast to receive the men that are raised. Hitherto very great impositions have been resorted to, which may be obviated by a demand being made on every description of people who claim exemption from the army of reserve and the militia, for they claim exemption as being liable to the impress, and by that means escape being called on for any service. In the county of Inverness I am told that 2,000 men claimed exemption from the militia and army of reserve for no other reason.

I think a great many men may be raised by having a small vessel stationed to cruise at the entrance of the Clyde, to board the homeward-bound ships ; for now all the seamen are landed from them long before they get the length of the guardship at Greenock. The same happens on this side the coast, and the seamen are all landed before the ships come into port, and by that means escape the impress ; and for that reason, if you don't approve of the purchase of the vessel lately reported on for the service of Lieutenant Scott at Shetland, I really think she would be very usefully employed at the entrance of the Firth of Forth, to board the ships bound in before they reach the shore. She may be manned and taken care of by the Texel, which would save the expense of an establishment for her.

Some time back I recommended to Admiral Gambier an application being made to the magistrates throughout this country to cause straggling seafaring men to be apprehended, and likewise for the military to be directed to take up all that may come in their way, which would prevent desertion, which is very common. In Fifeshire the seafaring people get concealed until protections are procured for them to join merchant ships fitting out in the

different ports in the kingdom. We failed last year in obtaining any men from the Greenland ships on their return home for want of vessels being stationed to fall in with them previous to their making the land, where they always grant those who are unprotected on shore to travel through the country.

If what I have stated to you affords any information for the benefit of the service I shall be glad, and am, with great regard, my dear sir,

Your very faithful, humble servant,

J. VASHON.

Leith, 4th April.

My dear Sir,—I have a letter from Mr. Marsden this morning, informing me I am not to require a greater proportion of men from the fishermen on any part of the coast of Scotland than one in ten. In answer to which I have told him that at the commencement of the present war a quota was obtained in the proportion of one in six from the fishermen along the coast of the Firth of Forth, and as far to the northward as the Moray Firth. The late season of the year prevented a vessel being sent with Lieutenant Gourly to the other part of the coast ; and soon afterwards a change in the admiralty took place, and the measure was dropped altogether. I have therefore suggested the propriety of putting all on a footing, and, before any further quota is required from those who have already complied with the demand made on them, that a quota of one in six should be obtained from those who have not hitherto been called on. If the board approve of the measure I wish to adopt, I shall follow it up and immediately send Mr. Gourly in an excise vessel which I have borrowed for the purpose ; and I think success will attend it, for the people on the coast of

Haddingtonshire and Berwickshire are prepared by a communication from the lord lieutenants for a demand being made on them of one man in five. You may be assured that I shall at all times be happy to give you every information in my power that may lead to forward the service. I am fully aware of the hurry of business you must be engaged in, and therefore have not expected a reply to every letter I have written to you. There can't be any doubt of great difficulty attending any measure for obtaining a quota of men from the fishermen on the coast of England, but I am of opinion it must, in time, be resorted [to]; and if the sea-fencibles are included, which I trust will be the case, numbers will be brought forward who really ought to serve, and should not be protected. The smuggling business carried on upon the eastern coast of Scotland and England is notorious, particularly Northumberland, and nothing will suppress it but the employing a class of vessels that sail equally well with the smugglers. There are now five vessels employed at this port by the commissioners of the excise and two by the customs, at an enormous expense to government, and I only know of one capture they have made since my residence here. The smugglers come over in large luggers, well armed and manned. They are often seen and chased, but always escape by superior sailing. A vessel such as you describe, if a diligent, good officer is put in her, may be of infinite service about Holy Island, but to suppress the evil entirely will require more vessels than can possibly be spared for that service. The vessels now employed by the excise and custom house are much too large, and they are always in port.

The small lugger I have written to you about is the best class of vessel that can be employed, and they must have good stout rowing boats.

I can't close this letter without saying that I am under great apprehension of the convoy service meeting with material interruption for want of my being supplied with means to afford it protection. Four armed ships, the Alonzo, the Woodcock gun-brig, and two hired cutters, have been taken away, and only the Nightingale brig sent to supply the place of them. I have applied to Lord Keith on the subject, and think it necessary to give you a private hint, for of all things I wish to prevent murmuring and complaints from the merchants. Hitherto we have gone on well. With best respects to Mrs. Markham, I am, my dear sir, &c.

Leith, 9th April.

My dear Sir,—I think the enclosed letter from Lieutenant Gourly will afford you some useful information respecting the smuggling trade going on upon the coast of this country and Northumberland.

I have by this post forwarded a letter from Lieutenant Dix, my flag lieutenant, requesting a fortnight's leave to be absent from his duty, and as he has some very material business that requires his personal attention, I very much wish that his request may be complied with.

Enclosed.

Texel, Leith Road, 8th April, 1806.

Sir,—Having been favoured with the perusal of the orders you were pleased to prepare for me to proceed along the coast, and to take an account of the fishermen, &c., residing on it, and [as] I perceive I am not ordered to take any account of the fishermen who reside on the coast of Northumberland,

who are for the most part notorious smugglers, I conceive it to be a duty I owe the country to state to you what I know in regard to them, and to beg that I may be ordered to register their names in the same manner as I have already done (which I had the honour of showing to you the other day) on the northern part of this coast. On no part of our coast is smuggling carried on to a greater extent than between Berwick and Tynemouth Castle. In the winter time it is carried on by luggers and cutters, mostly in the first and last quarter of the moon, when by the great assistance of the fishermen many cargoes of contraband goods are landed. In the summer season the smuggling is not so brisk, and is mostly carried on by doggers and coasting sloops, and such craft as are less suspicious. The cargo of those vessels is frequently covered by coals, or by a little grain, &c., and they often anchor as if stopping tide, when their friends the fishermen speedily take out the smuggled goods; or if any revenue officers are near them, information is immediately conveyed to the smuggler, either by pilot boat or by the more speedy fire of straw upon the shore. These fishermen also in many places vend the smuggled goods themselves; every person that knows the coast must bear testimony to the fact. I have taken the liberty to name some of the places where smuggling is by no means uncommon, and if a strict account were taken of the fishermen, &c., residing in them, the terrors of a visit from a press gang will operate more powerfully on their minds than the visits of a hundred revenue officers. I speak from experience. Captain Nash knows what I am advancing to be correct. When I registered the fishermen on the north coast they were all warned not to assist any smuggling vessel, or they would have their houses surrounded some

night by a press gang from the vessel I was cruising in. Their names, their description, and place of residence being in my possession, they were perfectly sure that I was able to do so at a time when they did not look for it, and so they declined to smuggle on the north coast for some months ; so much so, that a smuggler could not get a fishing boat to take any contraband goods on shore, and one sloop actually went into a small fishing village and landed her cargo on the beach, and another ran on shore and landed hers in Montrose Bay, as no fishing boat would assist in landing their cargoes. So part of both was seized by the revenue officers at Montrose. After fishermen are registered they are always more careful of their conduct, because they are then better known to the king's officer, and of course more liable to be surprised in case of an information being lodged against them. Such was the case at Dunbar a little time ago, when nineteen were seized ; for in general the revenue officers do not care about the men if they can secure the goods. King's officers occasionally visiting the little fishing towns keeps the fishermen in fear, and makes them attend more closely to their lawful occupations. A small swift sailing cutter, kept hovering on the coast between Tynemouth Castle and Dunbar, would be found truly serviceable ; the commander being known to all the fishermen, and having two good row-boats, would keep them in such awe of the impress that they would not dare to meddle with smuggling vessels.

If the cutter drew only 8 feet water she might go into several of the little towns hereafter named, as occasion required. Perhaps if such a vessel was manned by the stoutest of the out-pensioners of Greenwich, and had also twelve or fourteen

out-pensioned marines, no desertion would occur amongst her crew ; and a desire to make seizures both of men and contraband goods would be a powerful spur to their activity, without which nothing can be done effectually to crush this nefarious traffic.

The following places are known to abound with smuggling fishermen, or pilots as they call themselves :—Spittal, Holy Island, in which there is a tolerable good harbour ; North Sunderland, Boomer, Alnmouth, where there is a small harbour ; Warkworth, where there is also a small harbour and Riolet ; opposite to this little place is Coquet Island, on which there are no inhabitants, but there is an anchorage within it. Blyth is next ; between it and Warkworth there are several small cottages. Then Hartley, and a little south from it stands the Castle of Tynemouth. There is frequently contraband goods landed on the inner Farn Island. Between Berwick and the Firth of Forth are Castle Gate, Burnmouth, Eyemouth, Cove, and Dunbar, as well as several other straggling cottages near the shore, in none of which is the article of gin excluded. Finally, smuggling vessels mostly run from the land during the day, and come in with it at night. They frequently run along the coast from the Staples to the Buchanness, and land their cargo where they are best able. Cutters and luggers go off to sea and lower down their sails in the day-time, where their friends often send them the information they require by means of the fishing boats, who know their situation from the land.

I have the honour to be with great esteem, sir,
Your most obedient and most humble servant,
JOHN GOURLY, Lieut.

Leith, 29th April.

My dear Sir,—The service would certainly benefit by my having the revenue vessels at this port under my direction, for I should employ them when necessary on the convoy service, or keep them on the look out to suppress the smuggling trade, or in protecting the coasting trade against the enemy's privateers. They are now suffered to be in port the greatest part of their time.

If the officers commanding the Sea-Fencibles were directed to take hold of straggling seamen in this country some good may be expected from it. They are furnished with press warrants, but generally not inclined to use of them. I remain, my dear sir, &c.

Leith, 10th May.

My dear Sir,—I have just heard that a lugger which was considered as a smuggler some time back at this port is purchased by the people who are concerned in the infamous trade on this coast, under pretence of fitting her out as a privateer, and that a licence is to be obtained from the admiralty. I shall in a day or two obtain some particulars of this business, and will inform you of it. In the meantime I hope a licence won't be granted, for the only reason for the purchase of this vessel is to employ her again as a smuggler. I remain, my dear sir, &c.

Leith, 13th May.

My dear Sir,—I trust the Shetland and Orkney Islands come within the meaning of the order I have received for obtaining a quota of men from the fishermen on the coast of Scotland, for I have sent directions to Lieutenant Scott, the regulating officer at Shetland, to make a demand for a quota from the

fishermen of those islands. If the measure is approved of, I shall endeavour to obtain some men from the Orkney people.

The people of Berwick and Spittal keep back, and won't allow themselves to be registered, and I very much want a vessel to send there with orders to impress all that are liable. I had borrowed an excise cutter for the purpose, but she is for the present taken away from me.

Captain Tatham is obstructed in every measure he takes for raising men for the service at Greenock by the magistrates in that neighbourhood.

The withholding letters of marque and licences for the privateers from vessels fitted out at that port and Port Glasgow would have great weight in bringing the necessary gentlemen into reasonable terms, and induce them to enter into a compromise of sending some men into the service instead of making it a rendezvous for all the deserters from the navy. I have not obtained any further information relative to the lugger which has been purchased at this port by a company of noted smugglers, from the excise, under pretence of fitting her as a privateer.

If Lord Keith could spare two sloops in August to cruise to intercept the Greenland ships on their return from their fishing voyage it would hold out a prospect of getting hold of a great many men. I fear the convoy service will prevent my sending anything I have under my own direction, which is the cause of this hint to you, which you may make use of if you think it right.

[*Private.*]

Leith, 16th June, 1806.

My dear Sir,—It is now high time something should be sent to meet the Greenland ships coming home from the fishery. The Nightingale is the

only ship I can spare from the convoy service, and she will sail to-day. Another * vessel or two might be employed for a month on this service with great advantage. I remain, my dear sir, with great regard, &c.

* To cruise to the northward of the Orkney and Shetland Islands.

Some of the officers of the Sea-Fencibles are not furnished with press warrants.

Leith, 7th July.

My dear Sir,—As soon as I can procure the necessary information I will make a report to your board respecting Lord Dundas's memorial. In the mean time I think it right to apprise you that very few, if any, of the statements made in the memorial can be borne out by facts. I can't learn what men were taken from the islands by Captain Fanshawe, but the Carysfort's books will show it. The compromise entered on for sending one hundred men was very indifferently complied with, and many that were sent to this port were returned as unfit for the service. The whole, I believe, was, however, made up. But so far from Lieutenant Scott having raised 207 men for the service immediately afterwards, I don't believe there has been fifty men sent here from the Shetland Islands since my arrival in May 1804. The demand made for a quota of one hundred men at this time is, in the opinion of all with whom I have conversed on the subject, very reasonable, and what they ought to find, on condition of being exempt from the impress in future. And if the magistrates are disposed to have them raised, they may do it with ease and at very little expense, when the fishing season ends and when the men return who go to Greenland, many of

whom don't belong to the islands, but remain there skulking out of the way of the impress till the next season.

And they are a very great annoyance to the inhabitants. For these reasons I think Lord Dundas's memorial ought to be resisted, and I trouble you with this long letter as a preparation. The *Ariel* is arrived here, but has many wants ; she will, however, be off to-morrow evening, and I hope able to pick up some men.

I don't give any great credit to the report of the enemy having frigates at Greenland amongst our fishing ships. I however deem it necessary to put all our cruisers on the guard as much as possible. I remain, my dear sir, &c.

Leith, 22nd August, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I was much pleased to see the old *Texel* return, and although she was not so lucky as to fall in with any of the enemy's frigates, the sending her in pursuit of them has given satisfaction and prevented much clamour on this side of the Tweed.

The people of Shetland have had so many of their fishermen impressed this year, that I could not in conscience recommend the insisting on their complying with the demand made on them for a quota of one hundred, for the present ; and I really think in time to come, that having some cruisers stationed to intercept the Greenland and Davis Straits ships returning from their fishing voyage, will answer every purpose. But I observe that some of the ships' owners claim the release of people of every description that were impressed before the ship had completed her voyage by returning to her port ; but I hope and trust the admiralty won't order any to be discharged except those protected as line

managers, boat steerers, and harpooners ; I find the *Phœbe* and *Thames* have committed some error in this respect. I am in very great want of a vessel to send Mr. Gourly to the northward to collect the quota of men demanded at different ports ; my credit is worn out with the commissioners of the custom and excise, and the last application I made to them for one of their vessels met with a refusal. The lugger I wrote to you about some time back is again taken and brought into this port. She will be sold very cheap, and I very much wish to have her. She may be kept at one-fifth part of the expense of a tender, and would enable me to raise a great many men from the homeward-bound ships, for to evade the impress they land them before they come into port ; they are afterwards concealed and kept out of the way. Excuse this long letter, and be assured that I remain, my dear sir, &c.

Leith, 27th December.

My dear Sir,—Now the rendezvous at Dundee is broke up, it is very probable that it will become a hiding place for deserters and other seafaring men who wish to keep out of the way of the impress. And I think you will excuse my suggesting to you the propriety of Captain Nash having an order to send an officer with part of his gang to that quarter whenever he receives information to justify it. And I think the captain commanding the *Sea-Fencibles* in that district should be directed to make use of the press warrant he is furnished with to take up all straggling seamen. The *Julia* is gone to Dundee for the purpose of completing her complement, but I greatly doubt that any success will attend it without having somebody to co-operate with Captain Yarker on shore.

FROM ADMIRAL GEORGE MURRAY

Memo about Rio de la Plata.


From an attack having been in contemplation on the Spanish settlements in the Rio Plata, I collected what information I could respecting them, and think it very possible with a very small force to make such an impression on them as might, if thought proper to be followed up, undermine the Spanish power altogether in South America, and give Great Britain either a permanent settlement or influence sufficient to procure every commercial advantage she might desire.

The present land force in the Rio Plata from everything I can collect does not exceed 700 men, badly paid, clothed, and disciplined. As to militia, it does not appear that they have any, the government being too jealous of the inhabitants to trust them with arms. Every report says, from the great oppressions they suffer, particularly with respect to commerce, that they are generally disaffected and ready to throw themselves into the arms of any nation powerful enough to protect them, either by taking possession of the country, or by supporting them in shaking off the Spanish yoke and declaring themselves independent. Their wishes lead them to the last, but whether they are equal, either as to courage or resources, to give a prospect of success to such an effort, I am not, with the scanty information I at present possess, able to determine.

The Indians on the north-east side of the river

are on a very bad footing with the Spaniards at present ; so much so as to make it dangerous to go to any distance from Monte Video except in parties. The Indians are very much afraid of firearms, and having none themselves are not very formidable, but in all probability they might be made very useful in any attempt that should be made, as guides and pioneers ; the putting arms into their hands should be maturely weighed before it is resorted to.

From the filling up of the river, the port of Monte Video is far less useful than even a very few years back. The larger merchant ships are obliged to lay at too great a distance to complete their loading to be protected by the forts. The *Diomede* in November last found a ship loading off the harbour, protected by gun-boats ; but the water was so short that she could not get near her so as to make any attempt ; and when the *Concorde* French frigate wanted to repair, they were obliged to lighten her and drag her near a mile through the mud to get her into a place of safety. In consequence of this inconvenience the Spaniards have it in contemplation to fortify Maldonado, which is a much better port about fifteen leagues further down the river, but at present there are but very few guns mounted, and the other fortifications are in no forwardness. The only permanent naval force in the river is an old guardship, that is now in the mud, and a few gun-boats at Monte Video. On the opposite side of the river, and nearly opposite Monte Video is a roadstead well sheltered from the south-west winds, which are the most prevailing and only dangerous gales that blow. Vessels lay four or five miles from the shore in as many fathoms of water, and load from Buenos Ayres, either by small craft, or by a road which leads from the city to the water side, about twenty miles from the town, and which has been described to me as a very good one,



on which an army might march with ease with all its baggage, guns, &c.

Governor Brooke proposed to Sir R. Curtis to join him in any expedition he could undertake against the Spaniards in the Rio Plata, with a view of getting a footing and keeping possession till help arrived from Europe. Sir R. C. declined any attempt from the weakness of his squadron, but his only wish, had he been able, was to have taken what he could and to have gone away with the booty. Governor Brooke's plan, I think, exceeded his powers, and to have made a mere plundering expedition could have answered no good national purpose ; but I really think that if it is the wish of government to distress the Spanish Government in South America it is very vulnerable in the Rio Plata, and that a small squadron of a fifty-gun ship and four or five smaller ships with as many small craft and a body of troops not exceeding 1,500 men, including marines, might make an opening into the Spanish settlements, which might be pushed to any length, even so far as to overturn their government altogether ; and as it is probable that an increase of territory may not be wished for, the expedition might be so planned as to give us the power of introducing our commerce and manufactories into that country without burdening us with the expense of government, by garrisoning two or three strong posts and protecting the natives in their endeavours at independence, which they are said to be languishing for. I may probably at some leisure moment put my thoughts on that subject on paper for my amusement.

Another Memo on the same subject.

The immense extent of territory at present possessed by Great Britain may leave it doubtful in

many minds whether entering into so vast a project as the taking a permanent possession of any large tract in South America is feasible ; to those who think it would not be sound policy to do so I in a great measure join. Nevertheless I think that the Spaniards may be in the course of a few years dispossessed through our means of a great part, if not the whole, of their power in South America ; and I am of opinion that things are so ripe for change in that country, that on the first declaration of independence in any part of that large continent it will run like wild-fire through the whole ; it therefore becomes a consideration how the interest of this country may be affected by accelerating or retarding so material a change in so large a portion of the civilised world.

Supposing it is decided to attempt the change it strikes me that no part is so calculated for a first attempt as Rio Plata ; not but that it is probable that the beginning in many other parts might bring the matter equally soon about, but that I think the Rio Plata the most accessible, and that the force at first necessary to be sent would be so small that even a total failure would have but infinitesimally bad consequences ; for I think the whole naval force need not exceed nine or ten vessels, and none of those of a very large class, and from 1,500 to 2,000 men would be all that it need be necessary to send as a land force.

The force that is thought adequate being prepared, I would, besides, put on board 3,000 stand of arms, to be used as occasion might offer, with a few pieces of cloth and other articles of British manufacture for the purpose of conciliating the Indians. The fleet should also be victualled for nine months, and so soon as they were well at sea should be put at two-thirds allowance. The first port to touch at after Madeira should be St. Helena, where an

addition of 3,000 men accustomed to a warm climate and hilly country might be added to the force without distressing the island, as well as a very complete train of field artillery ; from thence the fleet should make directly for the Rio Plata and take possession of Maldonado, and from thence proceed to Monte Video, which there is little doubt would surrender at once to an imposing force or after a very slight effort, as it is in a very defenceless state. Those two ports being secured, the largest body that could be spared should be immediately sent across the river and landed at the *embarcadero* about twenty miles below Buenos Ayres, distributing such proclamations on their landing as should be agreed on, and marching as fast as circumstances would permit directly for the town, getting possession if possible of the citadel, but not suffering the soldiers to make any attempt on the town, which is so large that a small force once dispersed in it would be with difficulty collected together again in case of emergency.

Portsmouth, 5th November, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I was disappointed at not having the pleasure of seeing you at Chichester. I came here this morning and have again hoisted my flag.

Lieutenant John James Ridge, from *l'Aimable*, is here. Will you order his commission to be sent for Polyphemus (flag lieutenant)? Lieutenant George Phillimore is here, and has got his commission. Lieutenant Mayne was the one he was to supersede, but I find it was a mistake of Captain Heywood's. If there is no difference may he supersede Lieutenant Hunter instead?

And now, my friend, I wish to ask you some more questions. Will the board officially allow me

leave to return home when at our destination, in the event of ill-health requiring it? as before an answer to an application comes I may be dead and buried.

Am I at liberty to draw for my pay as a rear-admiral commanding in chief—I mean as Pellew or Troubridge—and my secretary considered as such to a commander-in-chief?

In the event of capturing ships or vessels of war, may I be allowed, if fit for the service, to commission them?

And now I have one thing more to say. You will be surprised to hear that I received enclosures franked by Mr. Marsden from Mr. Greville—letter to South America. I don't imagine Mr. Marsden when he franked the cover knew what it was to contain, or he would hardly tell Mr. Greville to send me a letter to any destination when it was not publicly known I was going; but I assure you I fear it is so well known that I doubt not but the enemy knew it and probably have sent out to apprise them, nor should I be surprised to find the three or four sail of the line (said to have escaped from Brest) at the place of my destination. In that case we should be in a pretty situation.

I find the store-ship will not be ready for some days. How does Africa get on? I am sending my things on board, and will get my live stock on board as soon as I can. Mrs. M. is here and joins me in all good wishes to Mrs. Markham and yourself.

Believe me most sincerely yours,

GEO. MURRAY.

P.S.—That you may not have to read over again my letter to answer the questions I will curtail them as below.

Questions by Admiral Murray.

1. J. J. Ridge's commission sent to Portsmouth for Polyphemus?
2. Lieutenant Hunter of the Polyphemus to be superseded by Lieutenant Phillimore instead of Lieutenant Mayne?
3. Leave given to Admiral Murray to return from his station in the event of ill-health?
4. Admiral Murray paid as rear-admiral commanding in chief?
5. The secretary paid as secretary to the same?
6. Admiral Murray allowed to commission such ships or vessels of war as his squadron may capture, if fit for service.
7. An order for Admiral Murray to have the three time-pieces at Portsmouth.

Portsmouth, 7th November, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I troubled you with a long letter on Wednesday, but from not hearing from you to-day I conclude you are too busy to write. To-day I had a letter from Miss Richardson, who tells me her brother had just seen Lord Caledon, who told him he was going to the Cape with Admiral Murray. Should this be true, of which I have had no intimation from you, I trust you will manage that he does not embark in Polyphemus, but in Africa; as in the first place Bayntun will be paid for carrying him out, and I assure you the Polyphemus is so very full that there is hardly room for my things; and as it is, we must take casks of bread between each gun below, and water on the main-deck; therefore pray, my good friend, do not let me be honoured with the Governor of the Cape as a passenger. The storeship I trust will go out of the harbour on Monday, and will be paid the same day.

My stock is now getting off, and I hope will be all on board to-morrow. A cursed court-martial on a marine comes on Monday. I find Sir I. Coffin has been canvassing for Liverpool, but has given it up. I suppose he will return here, as Martin, I understand, means to give it up. Adieu, and believe me, with all good wishes to Mrs. M., in which I am joined by my wife.

Portsmouth, 7 November, 1806.

My dear Markham,—Since writing to you this morning I received the order to take the ships and vessels under my command mentioned in their lordships' orders, and have this moment seen the lieutenant-commander of the Flying-fish schooner. I find he is forty-one short of complement, but has twenty-six supernumeraries belonging to ships in the West Indies. He has no sub-lieutenant, master, or surgeon. Will you cast your eye on his weekly account?

I mentioned to you in my letter this morning that Caledon had told Mr. Richardson he was going to the Cape with Admiral Murray; however, I trust you will prevent his embarking with me, even should we take the convoy to the Cape, as I shall have General Craufurd when we meet, and really I do not know where to stow a governor or half his things. Do tell me if it is likely I should take any other convoy than the transports.

Portsmouth, 9 November.

My dear Markham,—As the shortest way I enclose Captain Bayntun's letter to you. If no first can be found and the second would do, Lieutenant Chads, who is just made into Illustrious, would be very desirable as a junior lieutenant. He is a clever, sensible young man. Camel goes out of harbour

to-morrow, and will, if possible, be paid. Polyphemus will be quite ready to-morrow. Five courts-martial I am likely to sit on. No order is yet come for the time-pieces, or signal books and private signals yet, ordered for me, but I suppose I shall have them to-morrow. I have not sent orders for Olympia and Dispatch or Africa to put themselves under my orders, waiting to know where I should order them ; but had you not better order them all to Falmouth ? if we are to go there, as is probable ; for this wind won't let the transports sail. The Flying-fish has no establishment ; Admiral Cochrane told the lieutenant her complement was fifty-five. He, some time ago, wrote for a master, surgeon, and sub-lieutenant, as well as for medicines, but has no answer ; a few marines would be of service to him, and I should think she would bear a surgeon ; there is a mate here. I have written to Doctor Harness to apply, if she bears a surgeon. Had not Polyphemus better get to St. Helens ? I shall then avoid courts-martial.

I find they won't advance for stationery, but will pay me after a twelvemonth ; however, I have bought it, and must wait the payment. I see in your order Olympia is called a cutter, but Mr. Steel's List calls her a schooner. Pray who commands Dispatch, as his name is not on the list ? Mrs. M. joins me in all good wishes to Mrs. Markham and yourself, and believe me, &c.

P.S.—Will you send an order to the board of ordnance to supply us with an additional number of blue lights ? They are so very necessary to keep a convoy together.

Portsmouth, 11 November.

My dear Markham,—No orders are received for completing Polyphemus, but I trust they are on the

road. Camel is out of harbour, and I trust paid ere this, so that we are quite ready.

I cannot send any orders to the ships at Plymouth till I get my orders, as I do not know whether or no I am to go to Falmouth. Your last letter gave me reason to suppose I should be there. Courts-martial are sad things for a man who has so little time left before he sails.

Mrs. M. joins me in best wishes to Mrs. Markham and yourself, and believe me, &c.

No orders about a surgeon, master, &c., for Flying-fish; 55 men should have medical assistance.

Portsmouth, 12th November.

My dear Markham,—Thank you for completing us. We shall, I trust, be tolerably well manned. I wrote the other day to my friend Mr. Tucker to request he would send me a book of new instructions and some of Popham's telegraphs, but none are arrived. If anything detain us, do send me some. Once more adieu, and with good wishes to yourself and Mrs. Markham, &c.

More courts-martial to-morrow.

Portsmouth, 15 November, 1806.

My dear Markham,—Polyphemus is at St. Helens, and the crew have been paid yesterday 27*l*. a man prize money. I wish it was spent.

You will say I am a great plague to you, but looking over the instructions for making officers, I observe the order still is in force that midshipmen must pass at home before they can be made lieutenants. This order, of course, is a very proper one where they can get home and out again in any time,

but surely it does not mean they should come home to pass from a distant station. Lord Nelson wrote to the admiralty about it, and I think it was dispensed with in the Mediterranean. I have not had a line from you for some days ; I suppose you must be full of business and have nothing particular to say. I have everything now but my orders, and am quite ready. Adieu!

Portsmouth, 16 November, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I was on board Polyphemus this morning and am sorry to find no cocoa has been supplied her, but rice in lieu. I had so set my heart on all the squadron having it that I am very much disappointed, as not one of them have any. I do think, considering the voyage and the orders you were good enough to send to the victualling board, they might have contrived to have got it for the squadron.

From the easterly wind having lasted two or three days, I think Stopford with his convoy is far enough to the westward not to be obliged to put back.

The Indiamen here have an idea they are to go with me. I tell them No, I know nothing of it. The wind, I fear, is set in from the westward. Would it not be better that Africa, Dispatch, and Olympia should be telegraphed, or ordered by you to come to St. Helens? They would be here in one day or night, and as the days are now short, and weather uncertain, it is very possible they might be prevented joining me off Plymouth ; at this season of the year it is so uncertain, and the wind that would take me out, might keep them in Plymouth Sound. However, you will best judge of that.

Portsmouth, 18 November, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I am very glad you have ordered the ships from Plymouth; they shall be stopped at St. Helens unless they come through the Needles. The order for the cocoa to the Neptune is gone, and I hope will be on board Polyphemus when the weather will permit. I have been disappointed of having a chaplain. Can you recommend me one? I shall not take up your time by adding more.

Portsmouth, 21st November.

My dear Markham,—When I wrote to you yesterday I had not received my orders, or should have said a word about the levee. That is now out of the question. This wind will keep the sloops from joining, but I am astonished the Plymouth ships are not here. By my orders I presume I am to look into Falmouth to ascertain if Stopford is there or not. I don't find in any of my orders anyone to take *Néréide* or any of those small craft now with the convoy; but I suppose I shall find in joining the convoy that such as are not to remain with Stopford have orders to go with me. You have sent me two letters for Fanshawe directed to different places. Is it meant one should go one way, the other the other way, or both to B. A.? As it will be a long time before we again meet, I can only say how much I feel obliged to you, and how much I wish you and Mrs. Markham every happiness.

The lieutenant of the *Flying fish* has just been with me. He says a second lieutenant is appointed to her, but he cannot find him, and thinks he is senior to him. If he is not found before we sail I have a very good young man who has passed, by the name of Henry Prior, who has seen a great deal of service, and who has been with Hargood in *Belleisle*

in all his actions. Will you put him in? He is now midshipman of Polyphemus.

Tell Mrs. Markham, from what I see and feel for my poor wife, not to part from her husband, but keep you on shore, for it must be a great deal indeed to compensate for the pain of parting.

God bless you, my good friend, and believe me, &c.

P.S.—Since writing, the Africa and Dispatch are arrived. I find the agent victualler has purchased ten tons of cocoa, so that I hope all the squadron will be supplied. I have written to the victualling board about it, but there is an obstacle which they must wait to be removed before we can get it, which is the order from the treasury and excise respecting duties. I wish you could send to the treasury to hasten it.

Portsmouth, November 22nd.

My dear Markham,—I will receive all I can in Polyphemus, which will be the four-pound shot (400) and some cartridges; the many other things here intended for the William Pitt hospital ship, amounting to tons of cartridges, arms, clothing, &c., the transport board has ordered their agent here to put them into a coppered transport, to go with me. I told him I had no orders to take any vessel. Of course I should not wait a moment after the arrival of the two sloops from the eastward. He says everything belonging to the guns they have with them is left behind. Whose fault can that be?

It will strike you in looking and comparing Africa's weekly accounts and Polyphemus, the former having two months' provisions more than the latter. I find it is owing to Bayntun's having thrown out about forty or fifty tons of shingle ballast, and left

number of ordnance stores, which he thinks unnecessary to take, although by custom they are ordered. Polyphemus is now as full and as deep as the other, having bread between each gun below, and water on the upper deck. Cockpit likewise is full.

You will see by the letter you received this morning that my question respecting going to the levee was only in consequence of not having received my orders ; as for myself, I assure you I had no inclination, and only asked you if it was right to do it.

This cutter, by all accounts (the Olympic) is miserably off. She runs away with them ; her complement only thirty men, including boys, officers, &c., and these but indifferent. I wish we were off with all my heart, for the longer we stay the more our troubles increase ; when we sail we shall forget them all. Since writing the above I have been to Mr. Spencer, the ordnance storekeeper. He says there is no four-pounders with the troops, and that the whole that is left behind is on board two vessels at Spithead, amounting to fifty tons—besides the clothing, &c. ; and as Captain Patton has orders from his board, he is now gone off to see about shipping the whole in a coppered transport, which he says will be ready on Monday. Should the wind continue westerly, these ships may not be here from the eastward by that time, in which case am I to take her or not ? It is not only ammunition for the field-pieces, but tumbrils, &c., &c., to mount them.

Mrs. M. is just going to Chichester, as I am off with all my goods and chattels.

Thank you for the information you have sent me ; I wish we may succeed in getting hold of them.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, 24 November, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I only received your letter dated the 22nd this morning. I cannot say how much I feel obliged to you and Mrs. Markham for your kindness to me and my wife. It is indeed hard parting from those we so dearly love and are so happy with. My only consolation is, that I feel I am doing my duty, and ought to give up my private comforts to my professional duty. I look forward in the hope that my absence from home will not be more than two or three years at most, and, in the event of peace, I hope much less.

These strong westerly winds keep *Cormorant* and *Hermes* in the Downs. However it may be the means of our having the *cocoa*. A tender would be very useful to us during our stay at St. Helens. I fear Admiral Montagu, having only two, cannot spare one. Your letter came to me this morning in a merchant vessel's boat, and how I know not. We cannot risk sending our boats up—particularly as the men have so much money. It would really be a great benefit to the service if the *Olympia* and the gun-brig had an additional lieutenant for so long a voyage, for they are badly officered—at least the lieutenant of *Olympia* says he is. Could you order a second lieutenant to them both?

The good intentions of the admiralty about my stationery has not met with success. I had a letter from the navy board to say I was to have 40*l.* a year, but not to draw for any till I had been a twelvemonth employed. I have paid 56*l.* already, besides what I had before. However, as I have now settled his bill, I don't wish you to trouble yourself about it, as I suppose it is a rule of office at the navy board.

Respecting provisions, I hope you will soon let some follow us, as by the time we get to our place of destination we shall be in want, although I trust we may find a supply at the Cape.

The transport I mentioned to you that has been ordered to receive the ammunition, &c., for the guns is getting ready. Am I to have directions about her? It would be as well she was filled up with provisions, as she will have above one hundred tons spare, and if the William Pitt hospital ship to the army is to follow, she would bring a great deal.

I told Mr. Spencer, the ordnance storekeeper, I would receive what I could for the guns, but as he said the transport was receiving the whole, and that he had not any orders, none have been sent. In the event of my not having orders about the transport, they had better send some shot, and trust to fate and the ingenuity of carpenters for the other necessities for mounting the guns. I fear I shall not get this letter on shore to-day unless something comes off, as I cannot send a boat on shore.

I beg you will say how much Mrs. Murray and myself feel Mrs. Markham's attention—at least judge for Mrs. Murray by my own feelings, for I have not seen her since Saturday, as she is gone home, and believe me, my dear Markham, &c.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, 24th November.

My dear Markham,—I have just received yours of yesterday's date. Be assured I should on no account take under my convoy any vessel without orders. I do think there has been strange neglect somewhere about the guns going with the army, with shot, cartridges, and carriages for them left behind.

I shall attend to what you say about the frigate,

as well as the copper and gold. Once more adieu, &c.

P.S.—Remember me most kindly to Mrs. Markham.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, 26 November.

My dear Markham,—This wind is a sad thing upon us. I hope Stopford was well to the westward before these gales came on, and as I don't hear of his arrival at Falmouth I think he is gone on.

The manner of keeping the ship's log at present is very different from what it used to be. The master says he had a verbal order from Captain Redmon to keep it so, and I find by Bayntun, given me on his arrival, it is the same. It will puzzle the astronomical gentlemen, for it is now kept according to the calendar day, beginning from twelve at night. So that the reckoning is now put in the middle of the log, going on with A.M. I suppose there must have been some order for it from the admiralty, or they could not have altered it? Do tell me, and what the intention is by so altering it. I have desired Captain Heywood to have the ship's log ruled, so as to express more than ships' logs do in common, for I think every information should be put in the log. I don't know whether or no I shall not have inserted the rise and fall of my marine barometer or thermometer. A ship's log cannot be too full of information, and as Captain Heywood has a turn for these things he will correct it.

I do not expect to hear from the shore to-day, it blows so hard. The *Olympia* has not yet any assistant surgeon. I wish she had, or a second lieutenant. Why not give her one, and send out another to the gun-brig? It does not follow that all vessels of that class are to have them because

these might, as the length of the voyage is a sufficient plea for their having one. I have heard nothing more of the transport with the ordnance stores, &c., nor has any shot been sent to Polyphemus. I always thought the ordnance board was very correct. I know when my countryman the Duke of Richmond was there, it was very correct, but I rather think the present business must have rested with the transport board.

My best compliments to Mrs. M., and believe me, my dear Markham, &c.

P.S.—I cannot help reminding you of the necessity of a tender being with us during our stay at St. Helens. Two boats of the squadron have been kept two days on shore at the yard for want of one. As we were complete I have not let a boat go from the ship since I embarked, but as we remain we have our wants again.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, 27 November.

My dear Markham,—I enclose you the account of the provisions in Camel, and as soon as I get the weekly accounts I will send you a return of the quantity of provisions we have for the squadron. If General Craufurd has not stores enough for his troops, it certainly was not for want of your reminding him of it. I see by the papers to-day they were seen steering for Ireland. Two transports having run foul of each other, however, I hope they will again put to sea with this wind, which will likewise bring *Hermes* and *Cormorant* here.

The cocoa, I fancy, will be off to-morrow if possible; if not I fear we must go without it. I find there is no bunting or flags in Camel as store; we shall be much in want of both and no opportunity of getting it. I wish you would direct two or three

sets of flags and some bunting to be put on board her immediately, for we cannot get anything extra, of course, without an order.

Enclosed list of Provisions.

Provisions in the Camel for 1,300 men, which is the number, nearly (exclusive of what supernumeraries may be sent), of the complements of Polyphemus, Africa, Dispatch, Camel, Flying-fish and Olympia; in this I do not include either Hermes, Cormorant, Néréide or Haughty. Bread, 126,000 lbs.—nearly 14 weeks; beef, 17,990 8-lb. pieces— $27\frac{1}{2}$ weeks; spirits, 125,968 gallons— $13\frac{1}{2}$ weeks; pork, 17,880 4-lb. pieces— $27\frac{1}{2}$ weeks; flour, 27,212 lbs. (as beef)—5 weeks; pease, 740 bushels (about)—18 weeks; a proportion of rice and sugar. N.B.—There is no suet or fruit.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, November 28th, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I fear my letter did not get on shore yesterday in time for the post. I sent you an account of the provisions in the storeship, as store, and have now calculated what we have besides for 1,300 men—the number in the ships and vessels now with me—viz. Polyphemus, Africa, Dispatch, Camel, Flying-fish, and Olympia. I can say nothing of Néréide or Haughty.

Bread, 27 weeks; beef (including flour as beef), 28 weeks; pork, 28 weeks; rice and sugar, 28 weeks; pease, 28 weeks; spirits, 28 weeks.

I believe I made a mistake in stating the quantity of spirits in Camel, but not in the quantity of weeks, for 1,300. There is in Camel 7,873 gallons, which makes $13\frac{1}{2}$ weeks, so that the whole, including what is in Camel, is as enclosed.

The Dispatch has an acting lieutenant in her, put

by Admiral Young so long ago as the 3rd September, 1805. He is put in the vacancy of one of her lieutenants sent sick to the hospital at Plymouth. Should he not either be confirmed or superseded before she sails?—his name Justinian Burrell.

The wind is again westerly and I think will keep the sloops in the Downs. I am in hopes we shall get our cocoa to-morrow.

P.S.—The *Néréide* and *Haughty* I fear do not stow much provisions. Of course they will lessen the proportion I have sent you. Since writing the above I have received your letter and the packages for our friend. I hope Stopford has got round the Cape. I wish as much as you do we were off, but there is no commanding the winds, and I fear it now blows too strong for the sloops making any hand of it from the Downs. We are all ready. I hope they will want nothing here when they arrive.

I have just received a letter from Captain Joyce, of the *Camel* storeship, stating his purser is absent without leave and arrested for debt in London. The provisions of that ship are of such consequence that a purser should be immediately appointed. The master had charge of the store provisions when sent on board, but has since received an order to [*torn*] that charge to the purser, by order of the admiralty. However, the purser not having yet joined, he still has the charge.

No assistant surgeon is appointed to the *Olympia*, no mate to the *Flying-fish*.

Enclosed.

An account of the proportion of each species of provisions on board his Majesty's ships and vessels composing my squadron (now at St. Helens), includ-

ing that on board the Camel, as store ; supposing the number victualled to be 1,300 men.

Species	Proportion
Bread	Forty-one weeks
Spirits, &c.	Forty-one do.
Beef, including flour, &c.	Sixty do.
Pork	Fifty-five do.
Butter, including sugar, &c.	Forty-five do.
Cheese, do. cocoa, &c.	Forty-five do.
Pease	Forty-six do.
Oatmeal	A proportion

GEORGE MURRAY.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, 28th November, 1806.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, November 29, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I have just got your letter. It is now blowing strong from the westward, so that it is impossible the sloops can get round from the Downs. I sent you the statement of provisions yesterday for the squadron now here. I could not say what *Néréide* or *Haughty* had or did. I know what *Cormorant* or *Hermes* had, therefore the calculation is only for 1,300 men. I hope the sloops will want nothing on their arrival at St. Helens, as the same wind that brings them may take us all away. I have not been out of the ship since I first embarked, but I think I shall go on shore to-morrow ; perhaps that may change the wind. There is hardly a quarter of the globe that I have not been told I am going to. However, it must be well known in London, from the number and kind of people that have been consulted.

There can be no harm in suppositions, therefore I will ask you, Suppose a superior naval force should be where I am destined for, so as to render it impossible to act, would it not in that case be best to go

all hands to B. A. ? However I hope there will be no occasion. With best wishes to Mrs. M. believe me, &c.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, November 30, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I have made out the rendezvous, but shall not give them out (although all will, of course, be sealed) until the moment we sail. There are three separate ones. The first, if separation takes place before we get to the westward of the Lizard, *Falmouth*. No. 2, proceed to *Port George*, island of St. Iago—one of the Cape Verd islands; not hearing of my having sailed from thence, wait one week and proceed to sea, open rendezvous. No. 3, proceed to the *Cape of Good Hope* and wait till further orders. In rendezvous No. 1 I have mentioned that if, when at Falmouth, they should hear of my putting into any port in the Channel they will join me immediately. Do you think these rendezvous will do? I shall send a copy of the rendezvous (given) to the secretary of the admiralty on sailing. Will it be necessary to put 'secret' on the outside of the cover to him? I believe I shall go on shore this morning to stretch my legs, and as the wind is now at north-west and getting round, I hope the two sloops may be here to-morrow. I shall not close this before I see if any letter comes from you by to-day's post. In my statement of provisions to you, you will observe the flour is rationed as beef.

Now I have just received your letter. It is not a surgeon that *Olympia* bears, but an assistant is allowed in her establishment. The survey, as purser remains, will not take any time on board *Camel*, as the master has charge at present of the provisions.

P.S.—What a dreadful state the continent is in! I think [*seal*] must produce a general peace, but

God knows what sort of one that will be for this country. However, let us hope for the best ; things are never so bad but they may mend.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, December 1st.

My dear Markham,—The wind is strong westerly. I came on shore yesterday to stretch my legs and pay my respects to the admiral. And now, my friend, I have heard so good an account of the patent log, called Massey's patent log, that I really think it would be worth while for the admiralty to order us two or three for trial—one for Polyphemus, one for Africa, and another for the frigate. If you are of that opinion I will thank you to order them. Sir S. Hood has just hoisted his broad pennant. I suppose he will not wait for us, as I hear nothing can sail worse than the *Hermes* and *Cormorant*. Nothing I find is yet settled about the ammunition for the guns the army have with them ; I fear the army will be distressed. No orders respecting any going with us are received by the ordnance here. It is rather mortifying that I should have sent my poor wife home ten days ago. However, there is no help for it. Coffin is looking better for his American trip. With best wishes to Mrs. M., &c.

Portsmouth, December 2nd.

My dear Markham,—I am very glad you approve of my rendezvous. I agree with you that some time might be saved by not touching at the Cape, but when you consider the length of the passage to New Holland, and the time the troops have been embarked—that even should their water hold out, it may be absolutely necessary to refresh them, for that in my opinion is one great motive for going the eastern passage. I hope *Speedy* will not detain us ; indeed she must sail so superior to the *Cormorant* which is

one of the hired ships, that she will, I think, be round full as soon as *Cormorant*.

As you ask me if I think *Cormorant* a sufficient convoy, I confess I think her of so little force that any single vessel would be a match for her ; by having two, although neither of much force, I think the convoy much more secure. It is a chance if the enemy have not strong privateers cruising off B. A., knowing the quantity of goods our merchants are running out there. However, you must be the best judge of the probability of their meeting with anything superior to *Cormorant* after they leave me.

I mentioned to you yesterday my wish (if the admiralty should approve) of having the new patent log ; I have heard so much of it that perhaps you might wish to give it a trial.

I don't know what transports are with the troops, therefore am ignorant of their provisions, but I hope they have victuals with them. When on shore of course they will find plenty. I shall save our salt provisions as much as possible, and if I find it necessary on the passage will go to two-thirds of that article, as with plenty of bread, cocoa, &c., perhaps the crews may be more healthy than having full allowance of salt meat ; and when at the Cape, I hope the [*torn*] victualler there will give us fresh meat, and [*torn*] Sir Samuel Hood, I suppose, will push on his squadron when the wind will let him leave this anchorage.

Would it not be civil for me, and what perhaps may be expected, to write a line to Mr. Grenville before I sail ? I have never yet written to him ; I consult you on all occasions.

Portsmouth, 3rd December.

My dear Markham,—I had great hopes this morning we should have had a change of wind, but it

still blows fresh from the old quarter, and, from what I hear, I fear Speedy does not sail better than Hermes. The reason you assign for not ordering the logs are very sufficient, and now you will say I am whimsical in again asking for something. The fact is Bayntun, as well as many others, speak very highly of the new sounding machine, and I believe Hamilton has a good opinion of it. It may be most particularly useful in surveying. Can you order one? Is it meant I should wait for Speedy if Cormorant arrives first? Once more, adieu and believe me, &c.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, 4th December.

My dear Markham,—I am very much concerned that Dispatch is ordered to Spithead in consequence of the anonymous letter, the particulars of which I was ordered to enquire into. The Saracen is to replace her. I have written a letter to her captain to be ready to come out of Falmouth the moment I appear off, or send in for her. I wish, as Dispatch is taken from me, the Bellette could have replaced her. Poor Phillimore has been in anxious hopes of being ordered.

This wind, I think, must bring the sloops to St. Helens, and carry us all off.

I shall remember all you say in your letter of yesterday ; but are you aware that these coals are about twenty or thirty leagues from Port Jackson, and a wild rocky place, where ships cannot lay or boats land but in particular fine weather, and then it will be difficult to get at the coals? However, I shall see what can be done. In our examinations to-day we could not do otherwise than say there was reason for further investigation. You may be sure I would not have parted with Dispatch if I could have helped it. Captain Hawkins, in his conduct to this man.

has treated him as the man he supposed him to be, and which he really was, an impostor. I don't think he could have an idea of the real state of health of the [*torn*], who was a great rascal. I don't like the anonymous letters, and have no opinion of the late master, who, I think, wrote the letter. I wish the letter had not been sent till we had sailed. Believe me most sincerely yours.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, December 12, 1806.

My dear Markham,—The wind is still very strong from the westward. Centaur sailed Tuesday but was obliged to put back last night, not being able to make any head of it, although when she sailed the wind was easterly, and continued so here till eleven at night. I find she got over on the coast of France, and but barely fetched back again to St. Helens, so that the Cormorant, if we had sailed, would have fetched Dungeness. I cannot think where Speedy is, as the two days' easterly wind, I should have thought, would have brought her round. I find Captain Hughes, of the Cormorant, has an order from the admiralty to receive Captain Jones, to join his regiment. I thought everything was secret.

You have not said anything in your letter about charts. Do you not allow us them? I mentioned to you some time ago that I wished much to know if I might be allowed to commission vessels taken (I mean of war) in the event of taking any. You said my secretary would have instructions respecting it, which would be sent me, but I have not received any or has he.

I wish you would appoint (or let me do it) a second lieutenant to Olympia and to the brig at Port Praya. I assure you, and I know you agree with me, that it really is necessary. Sub-lieutenants were appointed, and I understand that is done

away. Olympia has none, so that there is only the lieutenant and master, and you know what kind of master they are subject to have. I shall leave the orders with Admiral Montagu for Speedy. Pray have you ordered Saracen to St. Helens? I have not heard anything of him; this westerly wind would have brought him here. Let me know what you mean to do about him. He might have conditional orders to come if the wind was westerly when he receives the order, or telegraph. Now it will be useless for me to attempt to sail with Cormorant until I have a fair wind. My stock are eating their heads off. They make me pay at Portsmouth eight pounds [*seal*] for pressed hay, while I am selling old hay at Chichester for five. Besides which I have paid 4*l.* 18*s.* for the bags they put it in; formerly we sent hammocks on shore to have it pressed in. If we continue to live as we used to do, I must look out for a berth on the King's Bench on my return. My wife says she is frightened out of her wits for fear she should spend too much money in my absence. However I will trust her. My best wishes attend Mrs. Markham and the young ones, and believe me, &c.

You know this is the first command I have had since I have had a flag, therefore I shall be thankful for every instruction that may be necessary for my conduct. I flatter myself you will give me credit for wishing to do everything that is right, and that you will not suspect me of being a money-making admiral. I am told Admiral Knight made near 20,000*l.* at Gibraltar—how I don't know. Jephson, the judge of the admiralty there, who arrived the other day, told me so.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, December 16.

My dear Markham,—These long westerly winds are particularly unfortunate for our expedition, as I fear it is not possible for us to get on the coast before their winter sets in. I hope the transports will find water enough to complete at Port Praya, although I know there are only two wells, and one of them brackish water, the other some distance from the beach. They will, however, get refreshed with fruit and some fresh meat, such as goats, &c. I see no prospect of a change of winds or do I think we shall have any till Christmas. The troops, by being so long embarked, will be good sailors. I see a little promotion has taken place. It brings you and me a little nearer to vice; and as some of the old admirals have lately dropped off, I hope we shall come in for vice in the next promotion.

I have been talking with Captain Heywood about surveying. He says the last patent logs would be very useful on that service, particularly in running across the bays and from headland to headland in boats to ascertain the distances. The expense of two or three cannot be great. If the board was to order them on trial, they will last for ever with care, and of course returned in store at the end of the voyage. I hear there is one at Portsmouth in the admiralty office, in charge of Lieutenant Harrison, I believe from the patentee. If the board should not think it worth the experiment, I believe I shall put myself to the expense of one. You would be much pleased with Captain Heywood's surveys. He has never gone anywhere without making very particular remarks and taken regular surveys when he has had time. Dalrymple¹ is

¹ Alexander Dalrymple, the first hydrographer. He was succeeded by Captain Hurd in 1808.

much indebted to him for many of his plans and surveys.

I might all this time have been enjoying my home at Chichester if this wind and weather could have been foreseen, instead of St. Helens.

Cormorant we have put quite to rights, but by all accounts she is a miserable thing for sailing ; I don't think she is one of your late board's purchase—I mean when you was at it. She never by any chance, I believe, goes more than three knots by the wind. The captain of her seems a gentleman and well informed.

I hear George Martin is to succeed Sir James Saumarez. I am glad to hear Lord St. Vincent is so well ; I will trouble you to make my respects to him when you see him. I had a letter from him the other day. If the new Naval Instructions should come out before I sail, I hope you will send me one, as many of the old ones are become obsolete.

The trial on Captain Hawkins, late of the Dispatch, has not yet taken place. I am afraid if the young man who said so much about it to us on the enquiry does not take care he will get into trouble. However, he is now palliating matters, and seems to [seal] such a trifling thing should have been enquired into. This is the acting second lieutenant who you were rather interested about, and who I wrote to have confirmed or superseded. He was in correspondence with the master about this business, and seems to have acted rather from malice than from a wish of justice, I fear. I told him at the time that, from what he said, it was his duty to have represented the conduct of Captain Hawkins, and not let near a twelvemonth pass, and Captain Hawkins quit the Dispatch, and then in an underhand way bring it forward, as it was very hard on Captain Hawkins, who was not conscious of anything of the

kind being against him. I don't know Captain Hawkins, but I hear he is not a kind of man to be cruel or oppressive. Believe me, my dear Markham, &c.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, 20 December.

My dear Markham,—The lieutenant of Comus is dismissed his ship and put at the bottom of the list; the sentence and minutes shall be sent to-morrow.

I much fear the transports will not keep up their daily expense of water from the wells of Port Praya, and Stopford may not have sent any of them to Mayo, expecting us to be soon after him. If I find them short, why not go to Buenos Ayres to complete? It is not much out of the way, and as for its giving alarm to the other coast, they must be on their guard, from having lost Buenos Ayres and knowing an expedition is going somewhere from this country; and indeed, from the number of people that have been consulted, I fear the destination of the troops is no secret.

The winter, at all events, from the delay of winds, &c., must be set in before we can possibly get to our destination, so that a week sooner or later now can make no difference. If we could have foreseen these long westerly winds it would have been a good thing for some of Stopford's squadron to have gone out with the transports, as single ships would have overtaken them. I hope what one of the papers state is not true, that some of the transports have put back. I think from their situation when you last heard they must have gone on.

This long westerly wind has not only affected my spirits but will, if it continues, make me ill. However, it is of no use to fret, and I must make my mind up to stay here till Christmas at least.

Cormorant, I hear, sails so very bad that she will detain us when we do go. She is a sad tool.

Hood could not get out the other even, and was glad to get back again. I have sent orders to be given to Speedy on her arrival at St. Helens, enclosed to Admiral Montagu. Believe me, my dear Markham, &c.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, 21st December, 6 P.M.

My dear Markham,—I had hopes that we should have had a wind to carry us away this afternoon; it suddenly flew round to the northward, on which I made the signal and unmoored, but it soon got back to north-west. Sir Samuel has again attempted, for the third time, and if it gets moderate, with his ships and the Comus he may beat down Channel, but I am sure if I attempted it with the Cormorant I should only lose ground. It is, however, mortifying to me to see ships going to sea, and I not able to follow, as I am as anxious as any person possibly can be. We are now at single anchor and the moment the wind will permit I certainly shall go, as Mr. Grenville may, on finding Sir Samuel Hood has sailed and I not, think it singular, not knowing, perhaps, the difference of going to sea with a seventy-four and going with a ship like the Cormorant. I hope you will explain the difference to him.

The wind is here to the westward of north-west, and it generally is two points more westerly in the Channel, and was there a chance of my ever getting as far as Portland I would attempt it, but I am confident I should lose ground.

Captain Heywood, I assure you, is very sensible of the obligation he is under to you for making him a captain, and very grateful for it. He called several times at your house on his return from India to thank you in person.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, 22nd December.

My dear Markham,—I was persuaded when Sir Samuel Hood put to sea yesterday he must come back again, unless there was a change in his favour. I confess I do not think even with a single ship I should have been induced to go to sea with the wind and weather so unsettled at this season of the year as it was yesterday. He came back to-day, after a very rough night he must have had, and from the thickness of the weather this morning, I was fearful he would not make the land.

When I recommended my friend Captain Bateman to you, and to request your interest in getting him a ship, I mentioned his having been second lieutenant of one of the ships at Copenhagen. I did not at the time recollect her name; it was the *Monarch*, the captain of which ship was killed. He is a very zealous, active young officer.

I mentioned to you the other day the idea of going to B. A. to complete in the event only of the transports not getting a sufficient supply of water at P. P. I am convinced that in long voyages the oftener troops can be refreshed by vegetables, fruits, and fresh beef the better, for cramped up as they are in general they must get sickly and scorbutic, and it is of the utmost importance to keep them in health, particularly as they are likely to be on active service the moment they land, and they have now been embarked so long that too much attention cannot be paid to their diet and health. The Brazils, perhaps, might be a better place than Rio de Plata, only that so large a force going either to St. Salvador or Rio Janeiro, would give an alarm to the Portuguese, and they perhaps might object to their having the necessary supplies. At the Cape they will get plenty of mutton, wine, and vegetables, and at N. S. W. I hope they will likewise meet with refreshments. It

is necessary, my good friend, to mention all these things to you. If there are objections to their stopping, of course you will say so. With all good wishes to Mrs. Markham, &c.

P.S.—I shall either myself or make Africa tow the Cormorant as much as we can.

[*Private.*] Polyphemus, St. Helens, 23rd December, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I never was more surprised in my life than on receiving a letter this morning from Admiral Montagu, calling on me (by their lordships' directions) to assign my reasons for not going to sea, when the Centaur did on Sunday last; and what still hurts me more is not receiving a line from you this morning.

Some one, or more, at the board must certainly have a very bad opinion of me as an officer to suppose I would not go to sea the moment I could; if really that is their opinion why was I employed? It has hurt my feelings very much to have a letter of this kind, which certainly implies that they think me either negligent or that I don't want to put to sea. After serving so many years as I have, without a censure, I cannot express to you how much I feel hurt, and if their lordships think I have neglected my duty, I am perfectly ready to answer for my conduct, as it cannot be pleasant to serve under a suspicion of the kind.

Portsmouth, 24 December, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I was in hopes I should have had a letter from you to-day. To you, my dear Markham, as an old friend, I have written without reserve, knowing that you never would construe anything I said to you to my prejudice. You cannot have an idea of what I felt at the order from

the admiralty yesterday, to give my reasons for not going to sea with Centaur. I have a very high opinion of Sir Samuel Hood, but surely I am not to look to him, as a junior officer, when I am to go to sea or not. I again repeat to you that, even with a single ship, I would not have put to sea when he did, much less with a squadron, and there cannot be a stronger proof of my being right than that Centaur has three times put to sea, and as often put back. Now had I gone to sea, there was no little probability of my fetching the same anchorage ; and instead of getting to the westward I should probably have been at Dungeness, or perhaps the Downs. Surely the admiralty cannot have so bad an opinion of my judgment as to expect I am to look to the Centaur for my conduct ; if they do, I assure you I do not. When I think the squadron under my orders can get to the westward I will put to sea, and not before, unless the admiralty should think proper to order me. In my reasons given for not going to sea I have given more than was necessary, as a few words would have been sufficient ; merely saying that the wind had come to north-west by west before I could weigh, would I think have been enough. If the reasons I have given are not sufficient to satisfy the board, I am perfectly ready for any inquiry their lordships may think proper to order.

I must hope and believe that the order could not have been sent with your signature or approbation. If it was, I can only lament having lost that confidence in your opinion which I always had thought (and with reason) I possessed. Can their lordships for a moment suppose that I am not as anxious to get to sea as they can possibly be for my going, separated from my wife and everything else that is dear to me, which I have been since I received my orders, for I have not been on shore since that day

till yesterday, when I came in consequence of the order? Can it be supposed I can be pleasantly situated, living on board at St. Helens in anxious expectation of a change of wind? These orders, my dear friend, hurt the service. Had my conduct even been such as to give their lordships reason to suppose I could in any instance neglect my duty, they might have put such a question, provided the winds had been such as to have permitted my going, and had I remained; but conscious as I am of never having deserved a rebuke, I am very much hurt; for put it in the mildest form, it is a reprimand, and such as I do not deserve.

I suppose some one of their lordships must have supposed I was enjoying myself at home, instead of being on board. I don't think there are many instances of an admiral being so much on board their ship; on the contrary [*seal*] as I have been. I will not add more than that I think my conduct in not putting to sea should have met with their entire approbation and not censure. Believe me, my dear Markham, &c.

[*Private.*] Polyphemus, St. Helens, 25 December, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I did flatter myself in the hope that you was not at the board when the order was sent to Admiral Montagu, and am happy to find by your letter to-day that I have not lost the good opinion you have always expressed to have had for me. The letter now sent Admiral Montagu has relieved my mind very much.

I put to sea last night with a light air from the eastward, but the weather is by no means settled, but after being called on for my reasons for not going to sea before, I did not know but that the same might have been repeated. I confess I went against my judgment. The wind soon changed to the west-

ward, but by taking all advantages I found, on standing in this morning, that we could weather Dunnose. However, it came on to blow so very hard and the sea up that I was glad to bear up for St. Helens, as the flood had some time to run and the weather very thick. It continues to blow hard at WSW, and I think Centaur will be obliged to come back, as I don't think he can reach Portland.

I think I saw him about ten this morning three or four leagues to windward of me, and immediately after we had some heavy squalls. With best wishes to Mrs. Markham, believe me, &c.

P.S.—Admiral Montagu thinks some other orders or package was intended to be sent to me from the admiralty, but none is arrived.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, December 27, 1806.

My dear Markham,—I am plagued with the commanders of the schooner and cutter. You will see by my letter to the board, I have been obliged to put Lieutenant Gooding under an arrest. We are now getting under way, although the wind is at WSW, yet, as it does not overblow, I will endeavour to beat to the westward. With best wishes to you and Mrs. Markham, believe me, &c.

P.S.—After all the trouble I have been at to get assistant-surgeons for these vessels, they have both lost them. That Mr. Dobie, of the Flying-fish, I hope the transport board will get hold of, for he told the lieutenant he had my leave to go on shore. He is now away.

Polyphemus, 28 December, 8 A.M.,
Dunnose, NE, 4 or 5 leagues.

My dear Markham,—The Olympia has sprung her bowsprit so bad, by report of her commander,

that I have sent him to Spithead for a new one. They are a sad set. Lieutenant Gooding, commanding the schooner, I have confined, and put one of Polyphemus' lieutenants to take care of her for the present, as I am sure the second lieutenant could not be trusted with the command after leaving the vessel to the boatswain and going on shore. I shall try what we can do to get to the westward, but *Cormorant* makes a bad hand of it. Should it continue moderate we may get on, but otherwise I must bear up or be drove past St. Helens. We have now a whole flood against us, and the wind from W b S to W b N, and then changing to WSW ; by these changes we have got so far as we have done. I wish you could spare me another brig instead of *Olympia*.

P.S.—The lieutenant of *Olympia* has three rendezvous, copies of which I sent you some time ago, except that, instead of putting into a port in the Channel, he is to open his first rendezvous off the Lizard, which direct him to proceed to Port Praya.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, [29 December].

My dear Markham,—I am sorry to say we have again been obliged to return to this anchorage ; after beating from Saturday morning we only found ourselves six leagues to the westward of Dunnose this morning at nine o'clock. The wind increasing and the sea getting up, I judged it best to get to anchor, as it had every appearance of bad weather. The *Polyphemus's* main topmast is sprung, but I cannot believe it is from carrying sail since we left St. Helens. We only observed it this morning before we bore up, although it has had a bend some days. I shall get another off as soon as possible. *Cormorant* makes out better in a sea than I expected.

Perhaps the board may think it necessary to order a court-martial on Lieutenant Gooding, of the schooner, if it can be done without delaying the squadron. I rather hope they will not order me to be a member.

I assure you the beating down Channel at this season of the year with a squadron is a very difficult task, particularly where you have one bad sailing ship.

We were lying up W and W b N, but were not far from the shore, and the wind right on, but the sea prevented our going ahead fast.

P.S.—It is provoking, now we have got here it is quite moderate, although it looks bad. However, it is an object to get a main topmast, and it probably blows as hard as ever to the westward.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, 29 December.

My dear Markham,—I fear I dated my letter this morning the 30th by mistake.

The lieutenant of the Flying-fish is so very penitent, and has produced so many strong testimonials of his good conduct in the West Indies, that I am induced, not having sent the letter for the court-martial, to forgive him. The fright he has got will make him be careful in future. I hope to get a topmast or spar to make one to-morrow.

Polyphemus, St. Helens, 30 December.

My dear Markham,—The Polyphemus's main topmast, the commissioner sends me word, shall be off this morning, but the weather and winds will not admit of our sailing. I am induced to trouble you with the enclosed letter from a very young man, who was my secretary when first captain, and who I have written officially to the admiralty about so often

in Lord Barham's time that I am tired of writing any more. The board admitted of his claim to be paid as secretary to a rear-admiral, and I understood orders had been given to pay him as such, as well as a Mr. McArthur (cousin of Lord Hood's late secretary) who was my secretary for a short time, but neither of these gentlemen have been paid ; I have a letter at my house from Lord Garlies saying as much. In justice to these gentlemen I hope you will order an inquiry to be made why they are not paid ; I only ask for justice to be done them. My last two official letters to the secretary of the admiralty on the subject were never thought worth answering, any more, I suppose, than was the one I wrote about a supply of the patent logs. However, these I can willingly go without, but the two secretaries being paid I feel myself bound to get done if I can. I do not hear any complaints from any of the little squadron from our late cruise except Africa having washed away a few head rails, &c., &c., but nothing of consequence. Colds from being wet we must expect at this season of the year.

Olympia has got her bowsprit and comes again to St. Helens to-day. I don't think she is of a good construction, for they cannot get her enough by the stern, so that her bowsprit with the least sea is always under water, as she is a Bermudian ; a standing bowsprit to steeve with a longer mast I think would make her a better vessel. The schooner is a nice vessel, I like her rig very much, and the third mast which she has [*seal*] the sail better and makes them more easily managed.

The assistant surgeon of her I hear is returned, and the lecture the two lieutenants have had and the fright they have been put in will, I trust, make them good officers in future. My best wishes attend Mrs. Markham and you, and believe me, &c.

I hope Hood has succeeded in getting down Channel, although I am told his frigate (*Comus*) was seen with a topmast gone off Portland.

Polyphemus, 16 January, at noon.
 Lat. by acc. 20° N, long. by chro. $21^{\circ} 43'$ W ;
 Island of Sal S, 72 leagues.

My dear Markham,—As I shall have a great deal to do on our arrival at Port Praya in giving orders and rendezvous to the transports, I shall write you the particulars of our voyage thus far. We sailed, as you know, on the 31st December in the forenoon, and the next morning were off Falmouth. The *Saracen* was so surrounded by the ships that it was some time before she could get out, and when she did the wind coming from the southward obliged her to make some tacks before she joined, so seven hours' fine wind was lost. We bore up about five in the afternoon from the Lizard; on the 10th at midnight we passed Madeira, but did not see it. A vessel spoke us the 11th, bound to St. Domingo; had seen it in the night. The winds were favourable, although variable, and we did not get the trade till the 14th in latitude $25^{\circ} 45'$ N; longitude, by chronometer, $20^{\circ} 48'$ W. A strong eastern current had till the 14th set us near $1^{\circ} 30'$ to the eastward of account, it then set to the westward about nine or ten miles in the twenty-four hours; on the 15th in the morning we saw the *Centaur*, who made her number and made sail on. She was out of sight soon after noon. Our passage hitherto has been very good, but would have been considerably better had the *Cormorant* sailed equal to the rest of the squadron. I think we have a fair prospect of being at Port Praya the 19th, if not sooner.

I do not observe that there is any paint or oil as store in the *Camel*. The ships will want both very

much in a warm climate. Will you think of ordering some when you send out? I find both Africa and Polyphemus have seen their best days; they both complain a little, although we have as yet had no weather to make them call out. We are caulking Africa and must do the same to Polyphemus. She does not at present make more than one inch an hour in fine weather, but seems weak in her stern frame. However, I hope she will last our time and answer our purpose. In the event of peace I trust you will immediately let me return home without waiting for official application. However, I see but little prospect of that at present. A war will probably be better for us. Sir Samuel Hood will probably send something home ere long, I shall therefore leave this with him. We have not seen anything of Speedy, I suppose she must have got to St. Helens the day we sailed. I was in hopes of making the island of Sal to-morrow night, but there is less wind. My best wishes attend you and Mrs. Markham, and believe me, &c.

P.S.—I shall write to you again on our arrival at Port Praya.

[*Private.*] Polyphemus, Port Praya, 20 January, 1807.

My dear Markham,—You will see by my letter of the 16 inst. how far we then were. Finding ourselves off Mayo in the evening of the 18, and no chance of getting into Port Praya before dark, I anchored for the night and came here yesterday morning. Sir S. Hood arrived here with Centaur and Minorca brig the day before. Waldegrave brought letters for me from Lord Collingwood, with the intelligence that Buenos Ayres was retaken by the Spaniards on the 12th of August. Stopford had been prevailed on by General Craufurd to proceed with the troops to the

Cape of Good Hope, the particulars of which you will see by his letter to me, a copy of which I have sent to the admiralty as well as a copy of Lord Collingwood's. Saracen sprung her bowsprit on the 17th so bad that it cannot be fished ; we are therefore making her a new one out of the topmast we sprung in our last St. Helens cruise, as I got a spar from Grey and permission to keep the sprung mast, which is fortunate for Captain Prevost. It will be finished to-day, and I hope in time for us to go to sea this evening, as Stopford had sent the *Néréide* on with the troops for Buenos Ayres on the 6th instant. I sent off the *Olympia* cutter last night to endeavour to overtake them, and ordered her to stay off the entrance of the Rio de Plata for a fortnight to apprise such vessels as might be bound to Buenos Ayres that it was in the hands of the enemy, and then go on to the Cape ; and as I thought you would wish to have *Cormorant* back, as she was to have gone to Buenos Ayres, I have ordered her to Spithead, and shall leave the same orders for *Speedy*, in the telegraph of Popham, with the governor of this place. Will this make a change in our destination ? If it should, and that the expedition is given up, I shall thank you to let me return, but I fear we cannot hear from you in time to know the intentions of ministry. Of course we proceed according to the present orders if we do not get others. I shall not caulk *Polyphemus* till we get to the Cape, and I think we may be there as soon as the troops, as they have only ten days' start of us. I hope there are provisions there, as Stopford will be in want for *Spencer* and *Theseus*, and it will distress us to give him any from our storeship. I shall only leave enough in *Cormorant* to carry her home.

We are completing our water, although not very good. By noon I hope we shall have all on board.

I send you letters which I will thank you to forward. You see what Lord Collingwood says about the Spaniards sending reinforcements to their colonies. I have given Waldegrave my despatches for Lord Collingwood. Surely you must have heard long ere this of the recapture of Buenos Ayres. What will now be said of Sir H. P. ?¹ I think Lord Howick foretold all this. I hope the admiralty will approve of what I have done.

With my best wishes to Mrs. Markham, believe me, &c.

Polyphemus, lat. 23° 50' S ; long. 24° W,
14 February, 1807.

My dear Markham,—By my letters of the 20th January from Port Praya, sent by the *Cormorant*, you will know of our arrival there, and that Stopford had sailed with the troops for the Cape on the 10th, having on the 6th detached the *Néréide* to Buenos Ayres with the 9th Regiment. After making a bowsprit from our sprung topmast for the *Saracen*, I sailed from Port Praya on the 21st at daylight. The *Cormorant* at the same time sailed for England. I hope my sending her home and leaving orders for the *Speedy* to go home likewise (unless other orders interfered) will be approved of. Buenos Ayres being taken, I did not think the board would like I should take these sloops on to the Cape. I sent the *Olympia* cutter the day I arrived at Port Praya, off the Rio de Plata, to inform such ships as might be bound there, of the intelligence I had received from Lord Collingwood, with orders to remain there a fortnight and then proceed to the Cape ; but I fear I shall lose the services of both her and the *Néréide*—at least for some time, for what is to become of the 9th Regiment ?

¹ Sir Home Popham.

Our winds since we left England have in general been very light, yet our passage hitherto has been good. We crossed the tropic of Capricorn yesterday, which is only forty-three days from England, including two days at Port Praya, but the winds are now so light that I fear our passage to the Cape will be long. It is probable Troubridge will be there. As you will have heard of the capture of Buenos Ayres by the Spaniards shortly after I sailed, I think it probable something will arrive from England before I leave the Cape, with some orders for me. I shall not, however, wait longer than may be necessary for refreshing and watering.

Our chronometers have answered very well, but the one of Mudge's, that Africa has, does not go well ; a regular account of them shall be sent to the admiralty, as Captain Heywood is very particular about them.

I am so much to the eastward that I think it probable we shall see the island of Saxenburg, if it exists. I find we are two days ahead of Medusa's track in crossing this tropic, besides being seven degrees to the eastward of her ; but he was here the end of May and beginning of June, when the winds were stronger in the southern latitudes than we shall now find them. I mentioned to you in my last that the storeship had no paint or oil, which is a very essential thing for the ships in a warm climate, to preserve them from the sun ; when you send out to us, will you think of it ? I never saw ships of war go so bad as we all do, particularly in light winds. I will send you our track from England when we arrive at the Cape, as I hope Stopford will not have sailed before I arrive. I shall of course send him and Hope home the moment I arrive, and if I can get any provisions out of them I will. We are now at two-thirds allowance of salt meat in order to save all we can.

The squadron is very healthy, and I attribute a great deal to the cocoa and sugar, which is a most excellent thing for them. With best wishes to Mrs. Markham, believe me, &c.

Polyphemus, Table Bay, 13th March, 1807.

My dear Markham.—I shall write you a few lines by this opportunity, although it may be a long time before you get the letter. We arrived here 11 inst. with the squadron in perfect health. Stopford with the transports was spoken with on the 25 January (by an American), on the line and the longitude of 22° W. The Harrier sloop arrived here the 28th February, and parted from Troubridge in the Blenheim and Java frigate on the 1st February, in latitude 21° 44' S, longitude 65° 11' E, in a hurricane of wind from Captain Finley's report. I am sorry to say there is great reason to be alarmed for the safety of both these ships. Blenheim before they left Madras was making seven inches an hour, and that had increased to eight some days before the gale. Captain Finley says she steered wild under her foresail and main topsail in the first of the gale, but having hauled her foresail up she appeared to steer very well. The ship did not appear distressed, nor was any signal made to indicate it; but he judges from her weak state and the violence of the wind, blowing in all directions, that she must have made more water, and not hearing of her since makes us very anxious for his safety. He is much wanted here. I have had applications to give directions for survey, &c., on shore, but have declined having anything to do with it, as it would take more time than I could spare here to go through with the business. I find Sir Thomas made Tom post in the Greyhound, after that ship and the Harrier had taken the two Dutch spice ships and the frigate, which

were sold for 200,000*l.* to the company, and for which Captain Troubridge has shared 26,000*l.* prize money, and of course his father the same. We are anxious to hear from Stirling, as nothing has been sent from that quarter since General Grey left him. It is singular that Sir H. P. should not have sent accounts home (of the Spaniards having re-taken Buenos Ayres on the 12th August) till November, and then by a transport. Large sums, I see, have been drawn for from hence, many things purchased. I have not yet approved any one bill, nor shall I, but such as I may order to be drawn, which I hope will not be for more than a supply of wine, if any. I find so much provisions in store that I mean to complete, without taking from our storeship, as they are paying high rent for the storehouses the provisions are kept in. Of course they will be discharged when cleared.

I shall write you more fully by the next opportunity, which will probably be soon. I wish much we may hear from you before we leave this place. I will thank you to send the enclosed to Mrs. Murray. I say nothing to you in this that is not quite public here, therefore do not put it in cypher.

Young Grant is as fine a lad as I ever saw.

Polyphemus, Table Bay, 15 March, 1807

My dear Markham,—As the ship bound to St. Helena is not yet sailed, I will say a few more words to you. I yesterday visited the hospital. It is more calculated for a port in England than for a small colony like this. I think it will contain near two hundred men. The additional buildings and alterations that have been made has put the government to a great expense, in my opinion unnecessary.

The ideas of the surgeon are on too large a scale. He was Sir H. P.'s surgeon, and appointed by him, but confirmed from home, although I believe has not been more than two years a surgeon in the navy. It is absolutely necessary in my opinion that some person should be here to put things to rights, and I much fear the man most capable of that office (Troubridge) we shall not see, as it is now fifteen days since the Harrier arrived here, and forty-three since she parted from him. The storekeeper has a list of the stores left by his predecessor, Mr. Hopley, but has not yet had a survey. Many that were purchased are useless. I cannot find out by what authority the surgeon of the hospital has been making all these alterations and buildings in the hospital, or how he has procured money. I see a Captain Fothergill, of the Lancaster, has approved of bills to the amount of 52,000¹ sterling, viz. 6,000¹ on the transport board—by the surgeon of the hospital, Mr. Vicary; 6,000¹ on the navy board—by Mr. Hopley, acting naval storekeeper; 50,000¹ on the victualling board—by Mr. Robertson, acting agent victualler. Captain Beaufort, of the Woolwich, appears to have acted with great caution and much like an officer, notwithstanding the sums approved by these officers. There yet remains some thousands for approval. I have told them I cannot approve but of such as I order to be drawn for present use, and for the immediate necessary wants of the service. I shall give the squadron one month's wine and fresh meat during their stay here, as the advantages of both are very great in long voyages, and the fresh is so much cheaper than salt meat. I hope Stirling has orders to come here. I shall send something to him soon. I fear he has

¹ Clearly one of these sums is wrongly written; but in either case, the monstrous irregularity remains.

detained the *Néréide* and *Olympia* as they are not arrived.

[*Private.*] Polyphemus, Table Bay, 23rd March, 1807.

My dear Markham,—I wrote to you on our arrival here, by a vessel going to St. Helena, and the letters were to be sent from thence the first opportunity. We arrived here the 11th inst., but no convoy. I found the *Harrier*, which had left Troubridge in the *Blenheim*, and the *Java* frigate in lat. $21^{\circ} 44'$ S, long. $65^{\circ} 11'$ E, in a hurricane of wind on the 1st February. The *Harrier* arrived here the 28th February, and no accounts have been since heard of either *Blenheim* or *Java*. I am very uneasy about Troubridge. The *Blenheim* was in a bad state, not docked since being on shore, and making eight inches in fine weather. I told you in my last I was in hopes I should not have had occasion to approve of any public bills, but I find I shall have much more than I expected, for provisions for the troops as well as some for the squadron, but none for stores or anything that passed before my arrival. I send my correspondence with the people here to the different boards. In some of the hospital you will see great irregularities. I am told 28,000*l.* have been drawn for buildings and repairs of the hospital only. I hope their lordships will approve of my not having entered into the details and regulations of the naval departments here more than to stop such expenses as I thought unnecessary, as it will be a work of time to regulate former abuses, and which I cannot, situated as I am, attend to; but it is really necessary some person should be here. Would to God poor Troubridge had arrived! The *Néréide* arrived on the 19th inst. from Monte Video, with an account of its being taken by assault on the 3rd February. Stopford arrived the same day with all the

transports in False or Simon's Bay. Why he went there after sending Haughty here to know if this bay was unsafe for them to come to, and not having any answer, I wonder at ; but he did for the best, although it will detain us, as I have ordered him to this bay with the transports, and he sailed yesterday, so that I am in expectation of seeing them here to-day. This bay is safe during the month of April. We should not have got the transports refitted or the troops refreshed for an age in that bay, and the expense would have been incalculable, as everything must have been sent from Cape Town, and each waggon ten pounds a trip ; no vegetables of consequence to be procured on that side. Pellew has destroyed a Dutch frigate, a brig, and many merchant ships in Batavia roads, and taken two vessels. I shall send Spencer and Theseus home as soon as they are ready, as well as Paulina. We are much distressed for fuel for the transports, and I am sorry to say that by all accounts they are most shamefully found. General Craufurd supposed the Camel storeship was laden with stores for the transports—I believe was told so by Mr. Windham. The Fly arrived here the 20th. I have received the despatches, which shall be the subject of another sheet of paper. Had Sir H. P. let you know when Buenos Ayres was taken, what trouble would have been saved ! Was there any difficulty about my going to Plata ? The letter received by General Grey must determine me to go with the troops, as Sir S. Auchmuty says he has not force to go or attempt Buenos Ayres. I hope to get the transports ready by the 10th, and if we cannot complete them with water by that time I must take St. Helena in my way, for I should be sorry to risk a NW gale in Table Bay with the transports. You know how distressed they are for fuel at Rio de Plata, and I

hope you will send out coals for both army and navy. What with the state of the transports and other things, I think our original expedition must be given over if we remain at Plata, for we shall be forced to break in upon our stock of provisions, stores, &c., not only for ourselves, but, I fear, for other ships in the river. I have ordered the transports to be completed to the same provisions as when we left Falmouth, and the squadron the same, so that we have not begun on the Camel. I am sorry to say Camel has a leak which we cannot get at, and I fear the rats are eating our provisions on board her. I have not heard of Olympia since she left us. When you can with propriety, do tell my poor wife where I am going, as I never give her the most distant hint of what is to become of me. Sir S. Auchmuty has sent to General Grey for grain and powder. One of the victuallers or transports that was here is now lading from the army, and I shall send her under convoy of the Fly, and by the same opportunity inform Stirling of my intentions.

I believe the river is a bad place for ships in their winter, as there is not water to go into the harbour, and they lay in very shoal water some distance off, much exposed. I fear the ministry has been much deceived as to the attachment of the natives of South America to the English. They are, on the contrary, I am told, very much against us; if so, it will require more than the combined force of Sir S. Auchmuty and General Craufurd to keep that country.

This cape, I think, must be a great expense to us, without much profit. The ordnance storeship bound to Ceylon, which came out with Ardent as far as Rio Janeiro, is still here, there being no ship to send on with her. Sir H. P. did not leave a single ship of war, and ordered all such as might arrive to join

him at Buenos Ayres. Believe me with best wishes to Mrs. Markham, &c.

[*Private.*]

Polyphemus, 27th March, Table Bay.

My dear Markham,—Paulina will sail to-day for England. Since my last, nothing particular has happened, except that I told you I had ordered Stopford to this bay with the transports. They all got in here the 23rd and 24th, and are now going on with completing their provisions from the shore to the quantity they left England with. Stopford had sent on orders to the agent victualler to procure provisions and refreshments, provisions for 5,000 men for six months, but as I thought that would be more than might be necessary, I only desired his order might be confined to 5,000 for four months, which will be a very great expense, but really necessary, I think, in our present situation. I had flattered myself in the hope of not having anything to do with the bills, but am unavoidably obliged to approve of such as may be necessary for the completing the provisions; and although I think and feel I am doing what is right, yet it vexes me so much that I think it will make me ill, for I am not equal to inspect accounts to see if they are correct. However, as the agent victualler here is the established one from home, I trust and hope he will do for the best, and that the board will approve of what I have done.

I sent you an account of all the provisions we had for the squadron before we left England, which you as well as myself did not think sufficient for the expedition, and that you would send more. The prices of the articles purchased here are much under the last contract. I therefore thought it my duty to keep up our stock.

We are now going on a coast in the winter, and I much fear for some of the transports. If we are

to proceed from Plata to our original destination, other transports must be procured in lieu of many of these we now have. Stopford has had very fine weather all the passage, not a gale to annoy them, and yet he has had a great deal of trouble with them. What then am I to expect at the season of the year we are likely to arrive off Plata? Spencer and Theseus will sail on Sunday, taking St. Helena in the way to complete their water, that their doing it here might not interfere with the transports, and take any convoy home that may be there, but not to wait. I fear I shall be obliged to call there with the transports, as we only get 100 tons of water off a day here, at this season, and I will not run a risk of their being caught here in a north-west gale; there is generally one, although not strong, about the new moon in April. I shall leave the Harrier here to wait for poor Troubridge if he should arrive, but I much fear for his safety. I shall at all events, I think, be obliged to wait at Plata till I hear from home, even should they be in quiet possession of Buenos Ayres, before I can proceed, for the ships there will want some of our provisions, &c., and I trust coals will be sent out, as fuel cannot be procured in any quantity there. How very unfortunate it is that you had not known of Buenos Ayres being captured by the Spaniards before we sailed! This sailing about with troops back again is terrible; they are at present very healthy, but if kept on board much longer, and this change here, may make them sickly, particularly when we get into the winter weather.

I must again repeat how annoyed I am at the idea of having anything to do with money matters; of all things in the world, I wished to avoid the authorising of purchase, and it will ease my mind very much to know if what I have done is approved of at home.

With best wishes to Mrs. Markham, believe me, &c.

St. Helena is very little out of our way, as I must go well to the northward to get the strong south-eastern trade—that is in about 20' S, and St. Helena is 16° S lat. However, I shall not go so far if I can complete water in time here.

Polyphemus, Table Bay, 27 March, 1807.

My dear Markham,—Although I have just finished a letter to you to go by the Paulina to-day, yet, as Stopford will sail on Sunday, I shall prepare another. I cannot express to you how much I feel for Troubridge, who I very much fear we shall not hear of. You will see by my letters and duplicates that Harrier left him in the Blenheim; she had not been docked, and was much broke, making before the gale eight inches an hour, and Java in a bad state. I have great apprehensions for the safety of both. Harrier parted with them the 1st February, and arrived here the 28th. Nothing since has been heard of either Blenheim or Java.

I will recapitulate some parts of my former letters, lest they should have miscarried. We arrived at Port Praya the 19th January. Stopford had left it with the transports on the 12th. We sailed from thence the 21st, arrived at the Cape the 11th March. Stopford, with all his convoy, arrived the 19th in Simon's Bay, and in this bay the 23rd and 24th; Néréide the 19th from Stirling, with an account of Monte Video being stormed and taken on the 3rd February with great loss. Stopford had sent Haughty on to the Cape to direct the agent victualler to have ready immediately on his arrival with the troops provisions for 5,000 men for six months and a quantity of vegetables. I was in great hopes I should

not have had anything to do with money accounts, but I find I cannot avoid it. I have, however, curtailed the demands, and have directed the agent victualler to purchase only such things as he has no in store, or that he cannot get from the commissary of the army, for 5,000 men for four months' whole allowance, besides the completing the squadron to what they left England with, not wishing to take either provisions or stores from Camel, as you and me agreed before I left England that we had not enough. The expense of getting provisions from the stores to the wharf to ship here is very great, as it is all brought down in waggons. In short, there must be some person here to look after them. I have had a great deal of trouble about the hospital, and this moment the agent has brought me the tenders, as I directed he would advertise for dieting, &c., the sick, and the lowest I believe is very near 3*s.* 6*d.*, exclusive of contingencies. I told him I could not, nor would I consent to such imposition. I gave him Dr. Snipe's plan at Malta, which is only 2*s.* per man a day including everything; and here, where mutton and beef is only 2½*d.* or 3*d.* per pound, tea and common sugar cheap, wine cheap, and in short everything but poultry. I have directed him to advertise again, but it must be somebody constantly on the spot to regulate things, and the sooner an admiral or a senior captain is here the better, for it appears to me that the idea is to plunder John Bull as much as they can. Two or three English merchants settled here, and who have made money by contracts, I believe keep the inhabitants from coming forward by their long purses—not but what the Dutchmen would make as much of us as they could. Be assured the sooner some clever fellow is sent out here the better for the country, and it must be some person who understands

business. Stirling, I think, would be a good hand. You will see by my letters to the victualling board that I have been obliged to let the agent victualler procure the supplies—the contract being out, and either a combination amongst the merchants not to supply things under a great price, or something of that kind, for the agent victualler has procured from the Dutch all the articles very considerably under the last contract or what they would now furnish for. I have sent them the agent's letter and difference of the prices, and hope they will think I have done right, as I am sure my only motive is to save as much to the government as I can. I will not finish this yet.

29th.—Paulina sailed on Friday for England, and Spencer, with Theseus, will go to-day, calling at St. Helena for convoy if any should be ready, but not to wait. Our transport will, I hope, be victualled in the course of a week, but I fear not watered, as we only get off about 100 tons a day. I shall, if possible, complete them with water, but shall not run a risk of being caught with a NW gale by waiting too long, as it will be better to call at St. Helena, although that might take me four or five degrees of latitude from the track to Rio de Plata, but the south-east trade might be stronger. I mentioned to you in my letter from Port Praya my wishes to return home on the event of the original expedition being put off, and I again repeat that wish and rely on your friendship to get it done. I find that anxiety of mind is making me nervous, and I really fear I shall be getting in poor Thornbrough's way from many circumstances that must happen at Rio de Plata. I think our original expedition must be at an end, or at least put off for a very long time.

The inhabitants of South America are certainly very much against us. They are priest-ridden, and

religion carries them a great way. The ships and troops at Monte Video will want some of our provisions, and many of our transports have a great deal of their copper off; the worms will soon make their way in, and they are very badly found in sails, rigging, &c. Stopford has had a great deal of trouble with them. As Stirling has been successful by taking Monte Video, you will not like to supersede him in that command, and poor Troubridge, I fear, we shall not hear of more. Before I receive your answer to this letter I hope we shall have Buenos Ayres, as the attack I imagine will be made soon after our arrival. Ships, I fear, cannot be of service to them, except the small craft. However, with them we can be of great use, and I trust it will soon fall. Anchors and cables I imagine will be wanted much for all the ships that remain on that station, as they lay off Monte Video in heavy gales, there not being water enough to admit of vessels larger, I believe, than a sloop of war in the port.

It is a bad season we shall arrive there in, and the transports may suffer; I shall get them into the port as soon as I can. The Fly arrived here the 20th, with the despatches for me and General Craufurd, directing us to go to the Rio de Plata. I shall send her with a victualler which General Grey is sending with the powder and provisions for the army at Monte Video. By Sir S. Auchmuty's letter to General Grey he states that he has not force enough to march on, or to attack Buenos Ayres. They had, I believe, embarked some troops for that occasion but landed them again. He wants three or four thousand before he can move, so that General Craufurd's will just do for him if we can get them all there and in health; but we must not flatter ourselves that they will continue so healthy as they have been, as the longer they are at sea, of course,

the more we may expect sick, and they have yet only experienced summer and very fine weather ; now they are to have winter. General Craufurd having requested the troops might have the same proportion of fresh meat and vegetables when embarked as our people, I have ordered it, as they should have what comforts can be given them. Of course they are at two-thirds of everything else. These troops have been so long embarked that it is a wonder they are so healthy.

The squadron, except the small craft, are now complete to about six months' provisions, besides what is in Camel. The army victuallers have only the provisions used by the troops on shore—no pease, sugar, oatmeal, &c.—and we have not touched on the two remaining ; one the general cleared at Port Praya, for he has got the account of what is in them and not Stopford. Stopford had ordered the pound of fresh meat a day per man to the troops at Port Praya. Of course I could not refuse doing the same here. Let me hear from you by the first opportunity, and from the friendship that has always subsisted between us, I shall depend on your good offices in complying with my request. I send this by Theseus and another by Spencer.

Once more God bless you, and believe me, my dear Markham, &c.

I hope you send out agent victualler, store-keeper, &c., to Monte Video, if you keep it, for there is nothing I wish to avoid more than purchases.

Polyphemus, 8th April, lat. $32^{\circ} 55'$ S, long. $16^{\circ} 48'$.
Cape of Good Hope, S 54° E, 36 leagues.

My dear Markham,—You will see by my letter to Mr. Marsden that we have left the Cape, and as I think their lordships will wish to hear of us by
s

every possible opportunity, I shall send the Flying-fish on to St. Helena to overtake the Indiamen, which bore up from Table Bay on the 5 inst., it blowing so hard, under convoy of the Sir Edward Hughes, and if she is going home with them will take the despatches. I have directed the captain of her to leave two anchors and cables, if he can spare them with safety to the ship, and that he or the governor may not know we are going there I have told him I will send for them. We lost two anchors in the south-east gale in Table Bay on the 5 inst., and I was obliged to put to sea. The convoy are all close to us, and we have a fine breeze at SSE, which I hope may run us into the trades. I have, as I told you in my letters by Stopford and Hope, been obliged to order purchases of provisions to complete the troops and ourselves ; all we have will be wanted where we are going. I think we shall not lose much by going to St. Helena, and it will give an opportunity of anything catching us, in case you should alter our orders on hearing of Stopford having gone on from Port Praya with the troops to the Cape. Some of our transports are certainly not fit to proceed on the original expedition, and indeed I think from circumstances that it will be given up, at least for a long time, for the ministry has been much deceived about the disposition of the inhabitants of these countries by Sir H. P. and General B. They are by no means, I understand, desirous of seeing us in Plata. I mentioned to you my wish to return to England if the original expedition is put off or given up. You will, of course, wish to keep Stirling in the command in Rio de Plata, as he has commanded there when Monte Video was taken. I think some of these ships should be sent home. The Lancaster must be in a bad state. I wish you to see my correspondence

with the agent victualler and with the surgeon of the hospital at the Cape. I have sent them to the victualling board and the transport board. The expenses of the hospital have been beyond anything. I have not approved of one of the surgeon's bills, and have ordered the agent of the hospital according to his instructions to victual the patients by contracting, and not to let the surgeon have anything to do with money matters. How they could keep him as surgeon of the hospital I am astonished at. The officers of the yard appointed from home appear very correct, and I believe the agent victualler an honest man, but it really is necessary some person should be fixed there as a commissioner, authorised to inspect the accounts and prevent further abuses. The mischief has been done by the people appointed by Sir H. P.

No accounts of either Blenheim or Java. I much fear for poor Troubridge.

The boats of the squadron were constantly employed night and day in getting provisions and water on board the transports. I hope you will send coals out to Plata. Fuel is very difficult to be got. I feel comfortable at getting the transports from the Cape, for had a north-west gale set in they must have been lost, and the fiscal told me, although a severe gale had not set in for some years so soon in April, yet from the weather we have had he rather expected it on the new moon, which was the 7th. I shall endeavour to send something home on my arriving at Monte Video, and by every opportunity will inform you of our proceedings. This circumnavigating with the troops is a new thing. I don't think troops were ever so long embarked before; however, they continue healthy, but as yet they have always had fine weather and no gales of wind. We may expect bad weather and

strong gales where we are going. A whaler which arrived at the Cape lost his masts going round Cape Horn last October, and was obliged to go back to Rio Janeiro to refit.

My best wishes attend Mrs. Markham, and believe me, my dear Markham, &c.

P.S.—Have the goodness to send the enclosed, and when you can with propriety, do tell my poor wife where I am and what is to become of me.

[*Private.*]

Polyphemus, 10th April, lat. $29^{\circ} 57'$ S, long. $12^{\circ} 36'$ E.
[Received in England, July 3, 1807.]

My dear Markham,—I have written to the admiralty as well as to you by every opportunity that has offered, and as I am now quite at sea, I will give you the heads of our proceedings in one letter since we left St. Helens, to the present time, and likewise send you our track to the Cape and after leaving it. The 31st December, 1806, we sailed from St. Helens, the squadron consisting of the Polyphemus, Africa, Camel, Flying-fish, and Olympia; the next day, the 1st January, 1807, we were joined off Falmouth by the Saracen; on the 19th anchored at Port Praya, where we found Sir S. Hood in the Centaur, and the Minorca brig from Lord Collingwood, with the account of Buenos Ayres being taken by the Spaniards on August 12, 1806. By a letter from Stopford I found he had sailed from Port Praya with the transports on the 15th January, taking with him Spencer, Theseus, Paulina, and Haughty gun-brig, having detached the Néréide with the 9th Dragoons for Buenos Ayres on January 6, and sent the Ganges and captain to England, the same day he sailed with the transports.

He informed me of his intention of proceeding with the transports to the Cape of Good Hope. I sent the *Olympia* on the 19th January, to endeavour to overtake the 9th Dragoons and prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy at Buenos Ayres, to cruise off La Plata fourteen days, informing such vessels bound to Buenos Ayres as he might fall in with of the intelligence I had received from Lord Collingwood, and proceed to the Cape. Having made the *Saracen* a new bowsprit, we again sailed with the squadron remaining, except the *Cormorant*, on the 21st January for the Cape. In consequence of *Cormorant* being ordered to Buenos Ayres, I ordered her to England, and left the same orders for the *Speedy* on her arrival at Port Praya. On the 11th March I arrived with the squadron in Table Bay, Cape of Good Hope. Here I found the *Harrier* sloop, which had parted from *Blenheim* and *Java* on the 1st February in a hurricane of wind in the latitude of $21^{\circ} 44' S$, longitude $65^{\circ} 11' E$, and from the account Captain Finley, of the *Harrier*, gave of the two ships I much fear they have foundered. *Blenheim* had not been docked since she was on shore, and made eight inches an hour in fine weather, and was much broke. *Java* had been lying near three years in the roads of Batavia without anything done to her. On the 15th March the *Haughty* gun-brig arrived from *Stopford*, with orders to the agent victualler to prepare provisions of all sorts for six months for 5,000 men; the 18th the *Campion*, one of the convoy, a victualler they had cleared at sea, and from bad sailing left her, arrived. On the 19th the *Néréide* arrived from Monte Video, with an account of that place being taken by our troops by storm on the 3rd February, and that the navy and army there were in want of provisions.

General Grey had letters from Sir S. Auchmuty

saying he had not force to advance or to attack Buenos Ayres, and must wait for reinforcements; he wanted 3,000 or 4,000 men more at least. The 20th March the Theseus arrived; the same day I received a letter from Stopford saying he had arrived in Simon's or False Bay, as they could not get the necessary refreshments and provisions there. The same day, the 20th March, the Fly sloop arrived with despatches and orders for me to proceed with the troops to River Plate. The Fly had arrived a day after I sailed from [Port Praya], and although no orders to proceed further, not knowing where to go, he opened the envelope and found letters addressed to S. T. Troubridge at the Cape of Good Hope, and came on. The 23rd, Spencer, Paulina, and the transports anchored in Table Bay; the 27th the Spencer and Theseus sailed for England, to call at St. Helena and take the convoy, if ready, but not to wait longer to complete their water. The 30th, the Fly sailed for Monte Video with a transport laden with flour, grain, and 460 barrels of powder for the army, sent by General Grey. By the Fly I informed Admiral Stirling of my intentions to join him in Rio de Plata, and sent him a copy of the orders I received by the Fly. I likewise wrote to Sir S. Auchmuty, as did General Craufurd. The 3rd of April a merchant vessel (English), called the Cape Packet, sailed for Madras; by her I wrote to Sir E. Pellew, not mentioning anything that would be of consequence should the enemy get hold of the letter. On the 5th the Sir Edward Hughes, with the following Indiamen, attempted to work into Table Bay, but from the violence of the south-east gale were forced to bear up, I suppose, for St. Helena: viz. Walmer Castle, Elphinstone, Ceres, Winchelsea, Alnwick Castle, David Scott, Essex, and Sinclair, a Botany Bay ship. They left China the 6th January, and

Penang the 29th. Sir E. Pellew had sailed from Penang for Madras on the 16th January. The strong gale on the 3rd inst. occasioned Polyphemus to slip two cables and go to sea, to prevent driving on a reef. The next morning I got hold of the ship buoys, but found one cable had parted and the other anchor broke, so that we were two anchors short and cables much rubbed. On the 6th sailed from the Cape with all the transports and squadron. We had light airs and hazy weather on the 7th, but on the 8th, in the morning, all the transports and squadron were collected and well up, with a fine breeze from the SSE. The same day, the 8th April, I sent the Flying-fish on to St. Helena with despatches to be forwarded by the first safe conveyance (of a ship of war) to England, and with orders to the Sir Edward Hughes to leave two anchors and cables on shore in charge of the governor, if she was going to England and could spare them with safety to the ship; and that he might not suppose the expedition was coming there, I told him I should send for them the first opportunity. I likewise wrote to the governor to the same effect. Thus far, my good friend, I have given you the heads of what has happened to us since we left England. I will now give you my reasons for everything I have done, and my future intentions.

In the first place I thought it of great consequence that the 9th Dragoons should be stopped if possible from going to Buenos Ayres, as well as such merchant ships as might be going there, from the intelligence I received by the Minorca from Lord Collingwood. I therefore sent the Olympia cutter off La Plata the same day that I received Lord Collingwood's letter.

For the same reason, that Buenos Ayres was in possession of the enemy, Cormorant and Speedy

could not go there, and I therefore ordered them to return to England.

In the former part of my letter I forgot to mention my having sent to St. Helena despatches for England by a transport that had been discharged and was going to Jamaica, taking St. Helena in her way, in a packet made up by the post office at the Cape, to be forwarded by the first safe opportunity from St. Helena. This vessel, called the *Loyalist*, sailed from the Cape the 15th March.

My reasons for ordering the transports from Simon's Bay to Table Bay were that everything being at Cape Town, except some bread and salt provisions in Simon's Bay, the troops could not have been supplied for a length of time, if at all, with provisions and the necessary refreshments they required, and the expense of sending anything from Cape Town to Simon's Bay by land is enormous. A waggon which does not hold much they charge ten pounds sterling for, only to go there; it is about twenty-three miles but a very bad road, and as Sir R. Curtis, who you know is a cautious man and a good officer, never ordered his squadron, when commander-in-chief at the Cape, from Table Bay to Simon's Bay till about the middle of April, I thought the transports perfectly safe in Table Bay till they could be victualled. The event has proved I was right, for if they had remained in Simon's Bay I don't know when they would have been completed.

And now it is necessary I should tell you why I ordered the transports to be completed in their provisions by the agent victualler, and why I authorised the purchases that have been made. When they left Falmouth they were complete to near six months. The victuallers that came out with them (which I did not know till their arrival at the Cape) were army and not navy victuallers,

and consigned to General Craufurd, and which I had nothing to do with. Stopford had sent by the Haughty (as before observed) an order to the agent victualler at the Cape to provide provisions for six months for 5,000 men. No time was to be lost in procuring these provisions, no contract existed, for the reasons stated in the agent victualler's letters to me, copies of which I have transmitted to the victualling board; and there being no time to make one for the present supply, I authorised the agent to make such purchases as were absolutely necessary. The reasons, I have assigned in my letter to the victualling board, and I enclose you the heads of them, with the prices, compared with those of the late contract. There has been one good attending it: two stores which were hired for containing the provisions are cleared and discharged, and the bread they had in store could not have been issued for a very long time, there being no squadron at the Cape, and must have been surveyed and condemned before it could have been issued if we had not taken it. I have taken every precaution in my power to prevent abuses in the purchasing, and I believe the agent victualler is an honest man. I have approved of his bills to the amount of ten thousand pounds, but more will be wanted to complete the purchase, as well as to settle other things, such as salary to the clerks, &c., &c. Captain Finley is the only navy officer left there, and I have given him every caution on money matters. As he was Troubridge's lieutenant, I hope he has imbibed some of his ideas on that head. So much for purchasing, which I never wish to have anything to do with, and the sums of money that have been drawn for by the gentlemen put into office at the Cape by Sir H. P. is beyond anything I could conceive, particularly by the surgeon of the hospital, who seems to have acted just as he has

pleased, altering and building without considering the expense, and making a palace of an hospital—at least an hospital that is more calculated for a very large establishment than that small settlement; hiring country houses for his patients, and the Lord knows what. I am told he has drawn, since his appointment, for twenty-eight thousand pounds. No country can stand these expenses, and the mischief is now done, but the sooner you send somebody out to inspect accounts and regulate their future proceedings the better. I disapproved so much of the surgeon's conduct that I would not sign one of his bills. I stopped his victualling the patients and forbid his expending a sixpence of the public money. I likewise ordered him to discharge his son who was a midshipman, and never brought up in the line of a surgeon, or had by his own account any medical knowledge whatever, but who he had appointed assistant surgeon of the hospital notwithstanding. He had the complement allowed by the transport board and had only twenty-four patients in the hospital. He had likewise employed a poor Dutch surgeon in Simon's Bay, authorising him to victual patients at a great expense, and allowing this man a high salary, which, of course, I have refused to admit of.

And now I will give you my reasons for making St. Helena a rendezvous in our way to La Plata, and for leaving the Cape without waiting for the transports being quite complete with water. The fiscal, who is an intelligent man, informed me that, although they in general consider Table Bay as safe during the month of April, yet it does happen sometimes that a north-west gale sets in very strong at the new moon in April, and he has seen most of the ships in the bay lost, on April 12, about ten years ago, at the new moon. Under these circumstances,

and knowing the transports not to be very well found, as Stopford's survey on them at Port Praya and which he sent home will show, I judged it absolutely necessary to get them away before the change of moon, which was the 7th, and it was my intention to have sailed on the 5th if that violent south-east gale had not prevented us; but I sailed with them the next day, the 6th. St. Helena offered as the best place for water, for notwithstanding the boats of the squadron were employed the whole time the transports were in Table Bay in getting their provisions and water on board, yet from only two of the water cocks running, instead of the four, from the dryness of the season, although we had one of the fountains in the square which the inhabitants gave up, and which we filled from likewise, yet all of them could not get their water complete. I would not let Spencer and Theseus water at the Cape, that they might not interfere with the transports; and when you consider the short time we had to provision, water, and wood these transports, many of them being obliged to lie some distance from the shore, and the difficulty the agent victualler had of getting all the provisions ready, I think a great deal was done in a short time. The great chance of separation between the Cape and the getting into the trade winds was another strong reason for making St. Helena a place of rendezvous, for nothing offered between the Cape and the Rio de Plata. The island of Trinidad you could not anchor the ships at, and when I considered the danger any of the transports might be exposed to from privateers, &c., if they had separated off the Cape, and were to make the best of their way to Monte Video, it confirmed me in my opinion that St. Helena ought to be the first rendezvous. The third and last reason is that as you supposed the Fly would overtake us at St.

Iago, not knowing we had proceeded to the Cape, I conceived you perhaps might again alter our destination when you heard by the captain of Theseus that we had gone on, and of course could not receive their lordships' orders to go to La Plata until our arrival at the Cape, in which case a fast-sailing ship might overtake us before we left St. Helena.

General Craufurd was strongly of opinion that from the accounts the ministry must have received from India, they would detach a part of this force to India, and the rest go to La Plata, and *entre nous* proposed the doing it to General Grey and myself, after we had received the orders brought out by the Fly. I told him I should certainly think it my duty to obey the orders I had received; that it was not for us to judge in the present instance; that it appeared the ministry wished this force to co-operate with Sir S. Auchmuty in preference to proceeding on the original expedition, and that any measures we might adopt to the contrary might derange their plans. He said he had given his opinion, and that if General Grey and myself did not agree with him he should think it his duty to write me a letter on the occasion. However, I have not received any, and if I had, it would not make me change my opinion.

And now again for St. Helena, which lies in about the latitude of 16° S. We must go as far as 22° W, or perhaps further, to have a good trade, and by going to 16° we shall certainly have it stronger, so that I really think it will not make a week's difference in our arrival at Monte Video, if it makes any, and by going there we have the advantages as above stated. I consider what I write to you as a private letter, at the same time meaning it for your information in what we are about; but I shall for the present finish, lest you should say I am as fond of

writing as you accuse me of talking. I told you in my last letters that if the original expedition was put off, or done away, I wished much to return to England, and I have mentioned my wish to Mr. Grenville, but I shall depend on you, my good friend, to get my leave to return, for I have no idea that the original expedition can go on now, at least not till you have perfectly settled La Plata, and I think you will be obliged to keep more troops there than you are aware of, and that you will likewise want troops in India, so that altogether I think our expedition must be given up ; and as you will wish to keep Stirling in the command at La Plata, he having been there during the attack at Monte Video, you will probably be glad of an opportunity of getting rid of me by letting me return to England. This traversing about the ocean with troops you may suppose is not a very pleasant thing for an admiral, besides the great expense it puts me to, which I really cannot in justice to my family afford. You have no idea of what the fit out cost me. I find the generals have money allowed them for these things. General Craufurd, as soon as his commission was signed, sent it to the treasury and got one thousand pounds immediately given him to fit himself out, when he was not likely to be at any expense of a table until he arrived at the place of his destination. However, I have only to hope for a prize to repay me. I again am sorry to say I have but little hope of poor Troubridge's safety. It was fortunate that Tom was made post and shared so much prize money.

Our going a few degrees out of our way by going to St. Helena is not like going out of the trades, as it is keeping in the trades and of course keeping the fair wind to a certainty, and stronger there than more to the southward, so that the more I think of

it the more I am satisfied of being right in going there, and I hope their lordships will see it in the same light.

I think Paulina will get home about the end of May, and I hope to have letters from you by the end of July, with permission from the admiralty to leave Stirling in the command and return to England. I have not heard anything of the *Olympia* since I sent her from Port Praya, so that I suppose Stirling has detained her, as he is in want of small vessels. I will thank you to give Mrs. Murray a line, when you determine on what is to become of me, as she will, of course, be anxious to hear. If you will let Mrs. Markham, I am sure she will write to her.

I think I shall be obliged to divide with Stirling's ships the provisions I have in the squadron, as well as stores, for I believe they are much in want of both. Some ships should go to the Cape, as there is only the *Harrier* sloop there. However, as you will know about this time of the taking of Monte Video and the ships Stirling has there, of course your orders will be there about the time or soon after my arrival in the river, about the distribution of them. It was very unfortunate the *Lily* did not overtake the troops before they sailed from Port Praya, as all the business would long ago have been settled in La Plata if she had. We shall, however, hear soon from you, for I think it of the greatest importance that you should know where we are as often as possible, and I trust you will do me the justice to say I have given you information of us by every possible opportunity. I wish Sir H. P. had done the same after the Spaniards had retaken Buenos Ayres; it would not only have altered the plans of the ministry but have saved many families from ruin, who have sent merchandise to

that country, supposing it to be in our possession. I am told there is near two millions of English property now lying in Monte Video, that they cannot get sale for.

I before mentioned to you the necessity of sending out coals to that country; they are much distressed for fuel, and you know how serviceable coals were to us when off Cadiz. I must now finish as I think you must be tired of my long letters. However, you must in some degree blame yourself, as you desired I would always write to you by every opportunity and most fully.

My best wishes attend you and Mrs. Markham, and believe me, &c.

P.S.—I send you a list of officers promoted by Troubridge from the Blenheim, and likewise a list of those remaining in her, as well as the passengers in her and Java; likewise the prices of the provisions which the agent victualler sent me, contrasted with those paid under the late contract.

	<i>Prices offered.</i>			<i>Contract prices.</i>	
Spices	s.	d.		s.	d.
Wine	3	3	Currency per gallon	4	3
Sugar	11		do. per pound	12½	
			(about 9d. sterling) Dutch weight		
Raisins 6d. and 7d.			do. per do.	13	
					do. per pound do.

[*Private.*] Polyphemus, 19th April, St. Helena bearing
N 64° W, distant 52 leagues.

My dear Markham,—As I think we shall be at St. Helena to-morrow, I will begin this letter and finish it there. I wrote you a long letter the other day, therefore have not much to say now; but I shall privately give you my opinion as to the original expedition going on; first, I think after the taking of Buenos Ayres you will not be able to spare troops from thence, for after taking it you must keep all the

troops you have to prevent its being again retaken. Secondly, the transports cannot proceed without fuel, which is not to be got there unless we break up a transport. Thirdly, many of the transports are so badly off for cordage and sails that they cannot in that state proceed. Fourthly, if our provisions and stores are to be distributed to the army and the squadrons now in the River Plate, of course we cannot go till more come. The account of the disposition of the inhabitants justified the first remark ; I wish we may find it otherwise. General Craufurd means to go home from Monte Video. There are two colonels there senior to him who are not brigadier-generals, so that he says he can't be well commanded by them having a commission as brigadier, and they cannot well be commanded by a junior officer. You will see by my letter to the board what I have done respecting the hospital at the Cape. I really think the sooner some person is sent there to inspect accounts and regulate matters the better.

Our poor friend Troubridge I have very little hopes of. I fear he must have foundered in that gale in February.

Will you send the enclosed to my agent? I would not have troubled you with it, but it is a bill for my pay and table money, and I assure you my fit out cost me so much that I am anxious to remit my wife all I can.

20th.—We made the land this morning, but it is now noon, and St. Helena a great way from us. I shall keep off and on till the morning, as we cannot get in with transports before it is dark.

23rd.—We anchored in St. Helena roads with all the convoy on the 21st, and are now watering as fast as we can. I find the India ships with H.M.S. Sir Edward Hughes, that could not get into Table Bay, arrived here the 18th. Stopford had sailed

three days before them. I would not give Stopford orders to wait, as it was not certain when these ships might arrive. Captain Ratsey in the *Sir E. Hughes* had orders to see them to the Cape, and if bad weather prevented their getting in there to proceed with them to St. Helena, and return himself to India; but there being no convoy here for them, and the island being distressed for provisions for them, having had such mortality lately by the measles as to lose a great number of the inhabitants, and the ships being very weak, the governor has written me a very strong letter requesting the *Sir E. Hughes* might go on with them; and really the reasons are so strong that I shall give Captain Ratsey orders to continue on with them, provided no ship arrives here in the course of a fortnight with orders to convoy them; for I find the *Sir E. Hughes* has twice been ordered home, but I fear from some little pique between Pellew and Troubridge she has been stopped, for first one gave her orders and the other stopped her, and then the other gave orders and those were contradicted by the other.

You have no idea how I am plagued with some of the masters of the transports. I shall certainly write officially to the admiralty to desire that some of them may be made to smart by paying the fine directed by the Act of Parliament for disobedience of signals and orders. One of them in coming here, notwithstanding I had pointed out what ships were to anchor first, &c., &c., told Captain Corbet, on his ordering him to shorten sail, that he positively would not; that he liked a good berth as well as him. Some of the masters are very attentive, but I fear in many of them there will be a great deficiency of provisions, for on ordering a return to be made me yesterday, I found most of them very short of the quantity reported to me by the agent victualler of the Cape

to have been sent on board of them. I hope to get from here on Sunday or Monday next, and shall proceed as fast as possible, but the season will, I fear, be bad by the time we arrive off La Plata. The squadron and troops are remarkably healthy at present ; I hope they will not get the measles amongst the troops. I find the Sir E. Hughes anchors much too small for us ; I have therefore taken Africa's spare anchor. There are two in an Indiaman here of our weight, but they ask 252*l.* for each, of 56 cwt., so that I shall not have them, and as I think some one or two of the 64's on the other coast will go home, I shall in that case get anchors from them. Captain Ratsey's account of the state of the Blenheim when at Penang gives more reason to suppose she could not weather the very heavy gale on the 1st February, so that I really have no hopes of his safety ; it seems he wanted another ship and had ordered her, but Pellew would not let her go, but ordered the Blenheim to join him. However, poor Troubridge had sailed from Madras before the orders arrived.

It is dreadful to see how this island has been distressed by the measles ; old and young have died, and you hardly see one house that is not mourning. The sooner these Indiamen get away the better, for they have many Chinese, who are liable to the infection.

I must again repeat to you, my good friend, my wish to return to England from Rio Plata, for I really find so much trouble and difficulty that I do not feel myself equal to it, or do I feel well. I am in constant fever. The expense of poultry, meat, &c., &c., is enormous. Here they ask about 20*s.* a couple for fowls, two guineas apiece for turkeys ; meat and vegetables in proportion. I thought the Cape bad enough, where we gave 6*s.* 4*d.* a couple for fowls. Claret here, six guineas

a dozen; in short I don't know how we are all to live.

I dined with the governor yesterday, with the general and his staff, and some of our captains. He is a very civil man, and I believe a clever one, but he let Sir H. P. talk him out of some of his troops to take to Buenos Ayres. I believe he is brother to Admiral Patton, and very like both the brothers. He has his island in high discipline and guns mounted in every part, that can depress enough to fire at an angle of 75° . It is quite his hobby-horse. I am to see some fired to-morrow. He says he can strike from the heights any one of our buoys, but I shall not put him to that trouble.

I wonder very much that there was not a captain sent out as agent to so many transports, for really we are all become agents, and the boats of the squadron and officers seem to do everything for them, or we should never get on. The transports, many of them, are so badly found that if we have severe gales I don't know what they will do for sails or cordage.

You see I take the advantage of your desiring me to write fully of everything, therefore I send you all my complaints. I will, however, now finish by wishing you and Mrs. Markham all happiness, and believe me, &c.

[*Private.*]

Polyphemus, St. Helena, 25 April, 1807.

My dear Markham,—I shall sail to-morrow. I am sorry to find the masters of the transports have not got the quantity of fuel and provisions at the Cape they were ordered. You have no idea of the trouble I have with them. Constant complaints, sometimes from the masters against the army, and army against the masters. I would not undertake to convoy transports with troops if I could help it on

any account where we have no authority over the masters. The fuel on the other coast will be a serious consideration, for if you mean to detach the troops or send for them home they can't stir without it. I hope the troops will not be distressed for provisions when they get there, but I fear they will be run hard, unless you have sent some out to Stirling. I am sorry to find, notwithstanding you and I mentioned pitch to be sent in Camel, there is not a single barrel, but twenty-seven of tar. The caulking the ships has run away with all we had. You would be astonished to see how open Africa and Polyphemus were, but particularly Africa. I shall be very happy to get to sea, for there I have some peace. I have ordered the *Sir E. Hughes* to wait here till the 4th May, and if no man-of-war arrives with orders to take the convoy, to proceed with them; but if one does, she is then to return to India, according to *Sir E. Pellew's* orders.

From what I hear of the other side I much fear the ministry has been deceived as to the advantages that might be gained; I believe it will only be attended with great expense, and that a large army must be kept there. It is very unfortunate that the *Fly* did not overtake us before we got to the Cape, for it is a devil of a round we are taking, and although the troops are yet healthy, yet we cannot expect they will keep so if kept so long embarked. I shall go to Monte Video and consult with *Sir S. Auchmuty* about the best means of getting possession of Buenos Ayres, and I really think from many circumstances that will be the end of our expedition; for some of these transports are very bad, and most of them are so badly found that it is impossible they can proceed on the original expedition in the state they are in. I assure you, my dear Markham, I never was so heartily tired of an expedition

or of anything as I am of this. I am in constant fever.

Now as I am writing, I have more complaints of irregularities in the transports. Another sends to me to request I will order him some rivets to mend the coppers. This is from one of the colonels. The coppers of many of the ships are very bad and will not, I fear, hold out long. It would be much better, and I am certain a saving to government, if there was a lieutenant and agent to every two or three ships, to see that good order is maintained and that they comply with their orders. Once more adieu! I hope you will contrive that we shall meet soon. With all good wishes to Mrs. Markham, I remain, &c.

P.S.—I have sent Captain Corbet's letter of complaint of the master of the *Alexander* transport to the board, and hope they will cause the fine to be levied on him. Perhaps you will send to them for the letter? We have about four months' provisions at two-thirds in the transports.

Polyphemus, 14 May, 1807.

Lat. $25^{\circ} 37'$ S, long. $41^{\circ} 29'$ W.

Cape St. Mary's, S 52° W, 296 leagues.

My dear Markham,—You will see by my letter to Mr. Marsden my proceedings since I wrote last. We sailed from the Cape on the 6th April, after experiencing a most violent south-east gale on the 5th, which drove *Polyphemus* to sea with the loss of two anchors. I mentioned in my letters by *Stopford* and *Paulina* that I should be obliged to go to St. Helena to complete the watering of the transports as it was very slow at the Cape, and I was apprehensive of a north-west gale coming on about the new moon in April, which would certainly drive the transports on shore. We arrived at St. Helena the 21st, and

after completing the water sailed again on the 26th. The Sir Edward Hughes had attempted with the China ships to get into Table Bay on the 5th April, but was obliged to bear up with them for St. Helena, where I found them, and having been requested in strong terms to let her go on with the convoy to England, although her orders from Pellew were to return to India, yet under these circumstances, and the island being distressed by sickness and not able to give the India ships the usual supplies, I ordered Captain Ratsey, of the Sir E. Hughes, that if no ship arrived from England or India with orders to convoy them, he should proceed with them ; otherwise to return according to Sir E. Pellew's orders. I understand the Sir E. Hughes has twice been ordered home before. In my former letters I have mentioned to you the expenses of the naval departments at the Cape, and particularly those of the hospital. I really think there should be a resident commissioner or admiral there, for it cannot be supposed that every captain who calls at the Cape can judge of the propriety of approving the bills. The sums that have been drawn are very great. The agent of the hospital and some other people there told me the surgeon, Mr. Vicary, could not have expended less than twenty-eight thousand pounds on rebuilding and altering the hospital, which in former times was thought large enough and good enough for the squadron then kept there. Since we have now had the Cape, there has not been so many, and, indeed, there is only the Harrier sloop ; I fear the Cape is a great expense to the country.

We made the island of Trinidad the 8th inst., and have averaged 116 miles a day since we left St. Helena. If we continue our wind we may get to Monte Video in less than a fortnight. However, I shall be satisfied if we get there the end of the

month, as we must expect variable winds soon and, when near the river, some south-west gales. The squadron and troops are very healthy, although the scurvy has within these few days made its appearance in some degree amongst the troops; and when you consider how long they have been embarked it is only wonderful they have continued so healthy. It has been owing in a great measure to the wholesome regulations adopted by General Craufurd. I fear from letters received at the Cape from Monte Video that both army and navy must be in want of provisions, and that we shall be obliged to unload *Camel*. If so, I think the sooner she is sent home the better, unless she is to be kept to be reloaded when stores and provisions come out from England, and that we are to proceed on the original expedition. However, I think things must be changed, and that a sufficient number of troops cannot be spared after taking Buenos Ayres, unless more come out from England. At all events these troops must have time to eradicate the scurvy out of them before they again embark. The general, I believe, means to go home soon after our arrival at Plata, believing that the expedition is given up, or at all events cannot proceed before he goes home and returns.

Troops, I suppose, must be wanted very much in India. From the account Captain Ratsey gave me of the state of the *Blenheim* at Penang, I have no hopes of poor *Troubridge*. I think she must have gone down in that gale.

Would not Stirling be a proper man to command at the Cape? He is an old commissioner, and I have heard him spoken of as clever, and a good pen and ink man.

I shall send the *Saracen* to-morrow morning with these letters to Stirling, to be forwarded in the event of any ship of war going before I arrive,

and of a merchant vessel, to send only the cipher letter.

With all good wishes to Mrs. Markham, believe me, &c.

N.B.—The cipher is deficient in many things.

Polyphemus, at anchor in the mouth of the River Plata, island of Lobos WSW, 4 leagues, June 3rd, 1807.

My dear Markham,—You will ere this have received my letter, sent from the Cape of Good Hope by Paulina and Spencer; and, before this can reach you, those I left at St. Helena to go on by the Sir Edward Hughes, with India convoy; and by this conveyance the letter I wrote at sea, dated 14 May, and which I sent on to Monte Video, but overtook Saracen before she got the length of Cape St. Mary's. I have now to say that we anchored here on the 27th May, the wind being down the river as well as the current has been since. All the transports and ships of war anchored with us. I sent the Flying-fish up to Stirling with information of our arrival, and having fallen in with the Unicorn, Medusa, and Daphne, cruising for us and for the convoy which sailed with the *Thisbe*, having parted with the convoy off Scilly.

It came on to blow from the WSW and SW the night we anchored, so that the next day many of the transports drove, and some parted a cable. However, only one has driven to sea, and her I sent the Daphne after, but the wind was so strong and the current setting out, neither Daphne or the transport was in sight the next day. Many of the transports did not veer cable in time, which was the cause of their driving; most of them have now two anchors down. This is a most shocking place to make or get into at this season of the year: what it may be in summer I don't know. The Flying-fish returned

on Monday, the 31st, with letters from Stirling, and likewise Mr. Grenville's and yours. Many thanks for those you likewise sent from my wife, which came enclosed.

It has been blowing from WSW to S with a heavy swell since we first anchored, with a strong current setting down the river. Stirling tells me the general means to proceed (as the bad weather is now setting in) the day after we get up to Monte Video, and wishes me to go up in a frigate if the convoy are not able to get up; but I really do not like to leave the convoy while at anchor so near the land, and, indeed, at present no frigate could turn up. Stirling mentions his hopes of my having a quantity of wine and spirits for the squadron, as they appear by the weekly account to have but little, and he has no more. Of course, there must be, I imagine, in the convoy of the Cormorant and Hermes, victuallers for the squadron, as I have no more than what was in Camel when we left England. I hope you will take care that we do not want for victuals, drink, or stores, for I believe nothing of the kind is to be got here but fresh beef. The Governor of Rio Janeiro, although I am told well disposed to assist us, yet will not, I understand, allow of more provisions, &c., to be purchased there than to supply the immediate wants of ships that may put in there distressed. Mr. Grenville observes in his letter that I shall find at River Plata the squadron, with those I take with me, to consist of six sail of the line and a fifty-gun ship, besides frigates, &c., which is for the protection both of the Cape of Good Hope and this river. He did not know at that time that the Lancaster and Diomedé had sailed for England, or that Stirling had mentioned in his letter to the board his intention of sending the Ardent to St. Helena, to be there in July to take home the convoy

should I not arrive at La Plata before the time he meant to send her. If she goes, the squadron will be reduced to only four sail of sixty-four-gun ships. However, when I see Stirling I shall be able to know more of the intentions of the admiralty, and I don't at present think any steps can be taken respecting the distribution of the ships till I hear from England, and have answers to my letters sent home from the Cape. At present there is nothing on that station but the Harrier sloop. I am sorry to find by Stirling's letter that the mass of people in the whole of South America are inimicable to us; a very strong force is assembled at Buenos Ayres to oppose us. The government of this country have already adopted the French mode of injuring our commerce most effectually, by sending strong parties in the country round Monte Video to seize on any English goods they find in possession of any of the natives and making prisoners of the people that purchase them, which must deter the country people from making any purchases. I much fear it will take a stronger force to keep possession of any part of this country than we are aware of, and that it will not, after all, be of any service to us. However, my opinion is only now formed from what I have heard. I am very anxious on many accounts that the wind should change and give us an opportunity of getting up the river, for I do not like being so near the shore with the transports. My best wishes attend you and Mrs. Markham.

[*Private.*] Polyphemus, off Monte Video, 17 June, 1807.

My dear Markham,—The many letters I have written to you since I left St. Helena I shall not send by this opportunity. I have only now to say that most fortunately we are all safe at anchor after the many gales, and being blown off the river after

first anchoring. I felt so happy at getting all the transports safe at anchor on the 27th May, off the island of Lobos, that I did not expect to have again put to sea with them. However, we were drove out on the 4th inst., and experienced very bad weather for several days. At last I found the only chance I had was getting to the southward. On the 12th we fetched up, nearly abreast of the English bank, but to the southward of it; the next day it was very thick and little winds, with a strong current setting to the eastward. On the 14th the wind came fresh from the ESE, I therefore determined to push up to the southward and westward and to keep vessels ahead sounding. You will hardly believe me when I tell you we were going seven knots for an hour and more, frequently only four fathom, and often quarter less. We stirred the mud up, but did not touch. General Whitelock and myself have endeavoured to plan out the best mode of getting up the river to the attack of Buenos Ayres, and as I conceive the taking of Buenos Ayres to be the wish of the ministers, I have given up a great number of seamen and marines to assist its reduction. The marines will assist in governing Monte Video, as the troops that sailed with General Whitelock are not yet arrived. I shall leave Stirling here with the line-of-battle ships, and shift my flag to go up the river to the Néréide, in which will also be General Whitelock. I don't know enough of the situation of the place to give my opinion of it. It is said they have abundance of troops and armed men at Buenos Ayres, and that they have a great deal of cannon, the streets all barricaded, and sworn to a man to die in its ruins rather than give it up. However, I believe they did the same at Monte Video. I fear from all accounts the people of this country are not our friends; however, perhaps the small force that

has hitherto been here has not been sufficient for them to declare themselves if any are attached to us. You may rely on it, my good friend, everything on my part shall be done to forward the service, and keep up the good understanding that is absolutely necessary should subsist between the commanders-in-chief of both services.

The taking of Monte Video was a most gallant thing. I don't suppose anything yet ever came up to it. I will write you more fully by the next opportunity. As Stirling had written home to say he would send the Ardent to St. Helena to take home the convoy, I have directed her to get ready immediately, and shall send her for that purpose, although the admiralty were not aware of the two ships, Lancaster and Diomedé, having gone home, or they probably would not wish to take another ship from hence, for we have now only Africa, Polyphemus, Diomedé, and Raisonnable. However, I trust you will send us out reinforcements and likewise provisions, particularly bread and spirits. You have likewise, I trust, sent something to the Cape, as I fear Blenheim is lost. I shall only add my best wishes to Mrs. Markham.

Polyphemus, off Monte Video, 18th June, 1807.

My dear Markham,—My public letter to Mr. Tucker will inform you of my proceedings. The current in the river at this season is very unfavourable, but as it appears necessary to have no delay, and the general is so bent on going immediately on, I shall give every assistance in my power. You advise me in your letter to consult Troubridge and Stirling. Be assured I shall have great pleasure at all times in doing it, and I feel at present in a most awkward situation, for although in some instances Stirling's opinion and mine agree, yet from circum-

stances, and from the spirits and sanguine manner of the generals, I am induced to do perhaps more than may be thought prudent by leaving the ships so short of men. The marines are landed, and by the urgent request of the general I have consented to 440 seamen, besides officers, going with the army ; and the number of men, besides, that those boats will take to man, leaves very few on board.

I don't know what opinion to give you of our prospects. I have no doubt but if we get the troops landed we shall take Buenos Ayres, but the taking of that may not secure you the country, if, as is generally said, the natives are against you. As Stirling had written home to say that he would send the *Ardent* to take the convoy home from St. Helena, of course you will expect she should go. I have therefore given Captain Chamberlayne his orders that he may be there in time, but I cannot send anything to the Cape till Buenos Ayres falls, and there is nothing there but the *Harrier* brig, for I much fear poor Troubridge in the *Blenheim* is lost. If I get no orders I shall, I think, send Stirling to the Cape as soon as this business is settled. I wrote to you yesterday by a vessel bound to Guernsey, and, indeed, I never miss an opportunity of writing, for I think it unpardonable in any officer not to send an account of his proceedings by every occasion. Monte Video is a miserable-looking place—beef, hides, and tallow you see at every corner of the streets. Beef to the inhabitants, I believe, is not more than one farthing a pound, and if they would kill it better it is by no means bad. Vegetables are tolerably abundant, mutton bad and poultry very dear ; but altogether the necessaries of life are reasonable, although fire and labour very dear. We are hourly expecting something from England, in answer to Stirling's despatches by the *Leda* of

the taking of Monte Video, and of course I shall have some orders. The storming of this place was one of the most gallant things I ever heard of, and I assure you the Spaniards did not show a want of courage in resisting, but nothing could stop the English bayonet. I believe at Buenos Ayres everything is governed by a council, composed chiefly of what they call independents, and I believe a great deal of mob.

They have barricaded the streets and have guns in every direction. The navigation of the river is very dangerous, and there is no accounting for its rise and fall : in half an hour it will rise and fall eighteen inches, and when not expected. I assure you I trembled for this ship and Africa in crossing to the westward of the English bank ; we had for seven or eight miles not more than four fathom, and several times the man on one side called out a quarter less four. We stirred up the mud, but in some places it was hard, although we did not touch fortunately, for we were going very fast. If we get possession and stay here, I hope next summer it will be better known. I shall hoist my flag in the *Néréide* the day after to-morrow, to proceed up to Columbia. My friend Stirling tells me of the difficulties I shall have to encounter, and which I am well aware of ; but if the ministry think it absolutely necessary that we should endeavour to get this country we must expect difficulties, but not give way to them, but Stirling almost makes me nervous. I only tell him that all I can do is to meet the general's wishes as much as possible, and not let it be said any obstacle to the expedition has been made by the navy.

I hope I shall in my next have an opportunity of telling you that we have been successful, and, with best wishes to Mrs. Markham, I remain, &c.

[*Private.*]

Nereide, off Buenos Ayres, 8th July, 1807.

My dear Markham,—I fear there will be great disappointment when the Saracén arrives, as the people in England are persuaded the army here would have conquered this country. I confess I had but little doubt but we might have taken Buenos Ayres, but I did not think we were nearer having South America.

The distresses of the army by General White-lock's account have been very great, but they have been short, for we landed with three days' provisions on the 28th ult., and again supplied them on the 2nd inst. with bread and spirits; beef they had in abundance. Their guides have deceived them and led them into swamps. I was very much surprised at receiving an account on the morning of the 6th from Captain Thompson, of the *Fly*, who had communicated with them, that Sir Sam Auchmuty's division was in a most distressed situation, having been cut up very much, and having sent a flag of truce to the Spaniards. Nothing could have behaved with more gallantry than our troops have, but they had to deal with an enemy who had loopholes in every house; and as our soldiers, I understand, had orders not to load, but to make use of the bayonet, they got into the town and were killed without mercy, for they could not get the doors of the houses open but with the utmost difficulty. Where we have failed has been in our mode of attack. The general had always told me he would not enter into the town in that way, and assured me he would get to the westward, where we could give him all assistance and make use of great guns, although not from the ships, and I had ordered everything accordingly. Craufurd and his whole brigade were taken very soon, and they have many more prisoners. I cannot learn the number killed and wounded, for our army at this

time are in three different places in the outskirts of the town, and with great difficulty could communicate until the truce was made. However, Liniers, I believe, forced our advanced corps into action, and they were very much advanced, so that they have all been attacked by piecemeal, the whole never having been collected. When General Whitelock sent for me on shore, he had a truce till noon yesterday, and, showing me the terms Liniers had sent by General Gower, told me of the disasters they had met with and the chance of doing anything of consequence, for although he observed we might knock down some of their houses, yet it could answer no purpose, and that the prisoners were in the hands of an enraged mob, that had determined to cut their throats if he persisted; that the generals were of opinion with him that it would be of no use to do any more, and that we had not a friend in the country. It is true our position commanded in some respect the town, for it is the Place de Toro, at the W end, and our gun-boats were well placed for battering the citadel, and had before the truce been of service. However, he observed that one great point was gained, by their allowing all the prisoners taken in South America this war to be delivered up. Under all these circumstances I was induced to sign the preliminaries with him, and I hope it will meet approbation. It is mortifying to the soldiers who have fought so gallantly, and what General Gower says is very true, that although he feels hurt as a soldier, yet as a man he thinks it much better for the good of his country that this treaty should be signed. I fear we shall have great trouble before we go, want of provisions and fuel, &c. I shall send Stirling (who from being at Monte Video I could not consult on this occasion, but I did Bayntun, who is a very steady man) to the Cape with Diadem.

Colonel Pack, of the 71st, who in this instance, poor fellow, was again taken prisoner and wounded, is just released and come afloat, as the Spaniards—that is the mob—are inveterate against him. He says that his division only, he thinks, had upwards of three hundred killed and wounded, and two thousand prisoners. Indeed, my good friend, I hope the putting up with the first loss will be better than going on, for at best it could only be a second America business. Colonel Pack is of opinion, who is just come from Liniers, who made him prisoner, that the inhabitants are so savage and enraged against us, from brothers, fathers, &c., being killed, that he thinks if we did not agree to those terms they would put all the prisoners to death. I shall send Saracen home the moment the general's despatches are ready, and as Sir Sam. Auchmuty goes home in her he will give a true account of the business, for, be assured, our ministry have been much deceived.

It is odd where Cormorant and her convoy are. I rather suppose they must have bore up for the West Indies ; if so, it is best, under present circumstances. Nothing has arrived from England since General Whitelock in *Thisbe*. Our sailors behaved very well ; they could not have got their cannon on without them, and as it was, some were spiked and left in the bog. I must call your attention to Captain Thompson, of the *Fly*. You made him a commander, and he has been a most active man on all occasions. He placed the gun-boats, and in short deserves promotion, for exertions should be rewarded although we are not successful. As the army have victuallers, I have requested the commissary may supply the transports. We shall have sad work to embark the troops ; it is so shoal, vessels cannot get near the land about Buenos Ayres. Provisions and

fuel, I fear, we shall be much distressed for. We must send the transports off in divisions, in which case I believe I shall send Diadem only to the Cape, with Admiral Stirling and the three thousand men destined for that place. Indeed, my good friend, you can have no idea of what I have felt and still feel. Our expedition has been most unfortunate, and I think Sir H. P. has much to answer for.

I shall now finish with best wishes to Mrs. Markham, and believe me, &c.

P.S.—I shall send duplicates home in a week after Saracen sails. I have just received a note from Bayntun. Our situation is very critical. The armed mob, which they cannot get to lay down the arms they have put in their hands, are likely to cause a great deal of mischief I am told. They had not less than 50,000 in arms in Buenos Ayres; every house is a block-house. If we can get provisions to carry us out of the country we shall be very fortunate. Rio Janeiro affords us nothing, so that we must have enough for some troops to go to England and others to the Cape. General Whitelock says we are not beat. I don't know what beating is if it is not like it. We have not yet got any provisions from the town, and I fear we shall not, notwithstanding all the promises. It is a sad business. God send us well out of it.

Polyphemus, off Monte Video, 18th July, 1807.

Dear Markham,—My letter of the 8th inst. by the Saracen will inform you of our dreadful reverse of fortune in this country.

I mentioned to you my being sent for on shore by the general on the 7th. He had then got the last terms from Liniers, which were that he would give up all the prisoners taken this war in South

America, we of course to do the same ; we to quit Buenos Ayres and the north shore in ten days, and Monte Video in two months ; a cessation of hostilities on both sides the River Plate. These are the principal articles. The general said, from our situation and the number of prisoners in the enemy's hands, he was of opinion, as well as was General Gower and the rest of the generals, that the terms should be agreed to ; that if hostilities recommenced he had not a doubt but all the prisoners now in the town would be put to death. Under all these circumstances I felt myself in a very awkward situation. I could not ask the opinion of Admiral Stirling, as he was at Monte Video with the squadron ; but Bayntun, who was with me, I consulted, and he assured me he thought I could not refuse to sign it. I hope my doing so will be approved of. You have no idea of the hatred of these people to the English, if come to fight them and take their country from them ; otherwise they are civil ; but as a proof of the few friends we have, not a single deserter has come to our army since we have been in this country ; and although it may appear disgraceful to the British arms to have submitted to these terms, I most firmly believe it will prove to be a great advantage hereafter ; for you must have sent constant supplies of men, and even some sorts of provisions to this country, and in the end have been forced to quit it. This is not my opinion alone, but I believe the general one. I cannot tell you the many uneasy hours it has and will cost me, but I hope I have done right, and that, placed in the situation I was, it was my duty to do so.

We have very great difficulties in getting ready. The communication with Monte Video is prevented for some days by the winds, so that boats are left on shore. I wish to God we were all well out of this

infernal river! Notwithstanding the many shoals, &c., it is remarkable that we got all the transports and vessels of war up and landed the troops without difficulty, and have brought them down again without the loss of a transport, when last night an unfortunate transport that was up the river for water for the squadron was lost on the rocks. We may expect shortly very bad weather. I shall get Stirling away with 1,800 troops to the Cape as soon as possible. He takes with him Diadem, Reasonable, Camel, Staunch gun-brig, and Paz schooner, and Néréide and Daphne will be considered as part of the Cape squadron after cruising off this river for some time after our leaving it. I have sent Bayntun to remain on shore to forward everything; as for the paltry vessels of war taken in Monte Video they are not worth taking away. Water casks, I fear the transports will run short of. I must leave some transports behind, under a flag of truce, to bring home General Beresford's and the other prisoners. We have now 400 wounded officers and men at Buenos Ayres, and our medical staff attending them. There is one satisfaction in all my misfortunes and troubles, which is that the army are satisfied with our co-operation, and cannot lay any blame whatever in the failure of the expedition on the navy. Thompson, of the Fly, has been very active. I have not had an opportunity of making a single officer since I left England. I am most particularly interested about the promotion of Lieutenant Ridge, if any opportunity should offer of giving him the step; and have many very fine young men on the quarter-deck deserving of promotion. I have appointed Mr. Wilkinson (who had been by Stirling appointed to purchase fresh beef, wine, and spirits) as agent victualler, for it was not possible to get on without some one to have the whole charge. He is one of

poor Troubridge's men, and of the right school. The merchants at Monte Video, I understand, are very troublesome; they have sold most of their cargoes well, for during this truce the Spaniards come in and purchase everything and at any price, as they evade their own duties. We shall have a great deal of trouble to get from hence. I wish we were well away. Nothing has arrived from England since the *Thisbe*. Her convoy, I think, must have bore away for the West Indies, and I am sending the *Rolla* to Rio Janeiro, St. Salvador, and Barbadoes to look for them. If found at either of the two former places the senior officer is directed, according to General Whitelock's instructions, to send the 89th regiment and 47th to the Cape, and the rest to England; but in the event of their being in the W. Indies, all to return to England. I just find we have not transports enough to take the troops from this country. We are looking at some prizes to see what can be done; it is a long way home. I have great hopes we shall muster provisions enough to take us home, but I fear some articles will be very dear. It does not appear to me we can leave Monte Video so soon as the time agreed on, but everything is doing to forward the transports. The *Fly* returned from up the river yesterday, the 19th. Captain Thompson says that the water fell so considerably where he was, which was at the same anchorage as the *Néréide*, that he had only thirteen feet; if we had not come away as we did we should have been fast aground. It is a most unaccountable river.

I am very anxious to get something to the Cape, and if I find the transport cannot be ready in a day or two, I will despatch Admiral Stirling in the *Diadem* and let the *Raisonnable* follow with the convoy. We have great difficulty in keeping our

water up, and I much fear shall be pushed hard for it when we all go. There is no place to stop at in our way home. We feel the want of an active agent of transports very much. We have still 400 wounded officers and men at Buenos Ayres; how we are to get them home I don't know, as we have not transports enough for the troops at Monte Video by 1,764 tons. The number of wounded takes up so many as hospital ships; we are looking at the prizes taken at Monte Video to see what they can do.

22nd.—I think I shall leave Charwell with Néréide instead of Daphne, and take her home. Our last convoy will be very large. You can more easily imagine my feelings at present than I can describe them, but I wish half I am worth in the world would insure us all in England this year. I fear we cannot get from hence in time.

A vessel arrived yesterday from London; she sailed the end of March. Strange changes have and will take place; the private station is now the post of honour.

I shall direct this to the admiralty notwithstanding. Once more God bless you, and if I live to return to old England (of which I have some doubts) I hope to shake you by the hand and talk over in private the adventures in this country.

Best wishes attend Mrs. Markham, and believe me, &c.

Polyphemus, 29th July, 1807, off Monte Video.

My dear Markham,—Although I have given you an account of the failure of the expedition against Buenos Ayres, yet I again write to you on the subject. I told you of the very unpleasant situation I was placed in as a navy officer. Having given the army every assistance they wished for from the navy, I was called upon to guarantee a treaty,

arranged by General Whitelock before I got on shore or knew anything of it. The situation of the army I thought critical: 1,200 of the prime of the army prisoners, as many more killed and wounded; the army in three divisions, and not able to communicate without very strong escort; the enemy flushed with success and worked up to a frenzy by their priests, defying us to attack them again, and refusing to alter the terms proposed by them, which were, that all prisoners to be given up, and for us to quit Monte Video and this country in two months. The general told me it was not only his opinion but that it was the opinion of all the generals that the terms should be accepted. In this situation, and firmly believing that if we persisted in the present disposition of the people and of our army we could not have succeeded, I signed, first consulting with Bayntun (Stirling being with the squadron at Monte Video), who told me in his opinion I could not do otherwise, that the generals must know the situation they were in better than me, and that if from my not signing they renewed the attack and did not succeed the whole blame would be laid to my charge.

The inveteracy of the Spaniards is not to be conceived. As a proof of their not being friends not a single deserter has come in since we have been in the country, and I am convinced had we succeeded in taking Buenos Ayres we should in time have been starved out of it, for the number of horsemen they have must have cut off all the supplies. Our difficulty is now how to get the troops home. Near 3,000 are going to the Cape. Stirling, with the *Diadem*, *Raisonnable*, and *Paz*, would have sailed two days ago with about 2,000 for the Cape, but the lowness of the river keeps the transports aground in the harbour. We expect near 2,000 men from the

country, which were made prisoners with General Beresford. A division of 2,000 will sail, I hope, in a week for England under convoy of Unicorn and Thisbe, and I fear all the rest must be kept till we leave this place. You may conceive what I have suffered and what I am likely to do from the anxiety of how I am to get all the troops home.

There will be great disappointment at home at our ill success, but if Sir H. P. had stated fairly the disposition of the inhabitants of this country, or have sent home when Buenos Ayres was retaken (which he did not do for ten weeks), all this would have been avoided. I am sorry to see that we are at war with the Turks, and have troops again in Egypt. We have too many irons in the fire. I fret till I get into a fever, and upon my word I doubt if I stand it out. However, I shall do all I can. My best wishes attend you and Mrs. Markham.

Polyphemus, off Monte Video, 11th September, 1807.

My dear Markham,—I gave you an account in my last letter of what had happened to us in this country, and when I reflect on it, and hear the accounts given of the people and of the country, I believe it will in the end prove fortunate, although disgraceful at present, in not succeeding in taking Buenos Ayres.

The encouragement given by the Spaniards for our soldiers and sailors to desert is more than they can resist. A fine country and climate, plenty of every necessary of life, and nothing to do. Any mechanic inclined to work is well paid.

But the whole of the country is against you; not a man has come over to us since our first arrival. They do not dislike the English as friends and to trade with, but as conquerors, they will [not] submit to us. The time of leaving Monte Video was out

on the 7th, but from not having the promised supply of biscuits from Buenos Ayres we could not leave it. However, on the 10th, a supply came, and we embarked our troops, and came out of the harbour. The transports are now up the river to complete their water, and I hope will be down to-morrow and that we shall get away, as the wind is now fair, and if we remain till the equinox I don't know what may be the consequence, for the river is dangerous and the winds blow very hard at times. You may easily suppose the anxiety of mind I have had and still have; I assure you I never suffered so much in my life as I have done on this expedition, and it has made me very nervous. I shall leave Corbet in the *Néréide* in the river with two sloops and a cutter, and have written to Stirling at the Cape to send the reinforcement to prevent our ships, which may arrive after we leave it, from falling into the hands of the Spaniards.

I think there must be a change in this government ere long; the people begin to feel the consequence. The viceroy and the *cabildo*, or magistrates, are at variance at Buenos Ayres constantly. General Liniers, who is now acting as viceroy, is treated with great contempt by the *cabildo*, and I think they will soon get rid of him. We have got near 1,300 prisoners of the 71st regiment, seamen, marines, &c., from the interior; they are now embarked on the transports and men-of-war. We have now near four and a half months' provisions in the transports, and if the water holds out I hope we shall get them home safe, although I fear crowded.

The expenses attending all this is very great; we have saved as much as we can. The arsenal was cleared and the stores upon board one of the transports, which I have sent to the Cape. I suppose not less than 50,000*l.* worth, for the Howe was

unloaded by order of Stirling. The purchasing of provisions for the transports has been attended with a very great expense, for the general kept upwards of 5,000 soldiers constantly embarked since we left Buenos Ayres. He was afraid to land them for fear of deserters, and you may be assured the merchants who had wine and spirits to sell had their price.

Medusa will leave us soon after we get out. General Whitelock goes home in her. I must now finish with my best wishes to Mrs. Markham, and believe me, &c.

*FROM MR. GRENVILLE*¹

Cleveland Square, 8 July, 1807.

My dear Admiral,—Many thanks for your letters from Murray ; they bear strong evidence of an anxious and active mind. It is no light service to be sailing half round the world with generals, troops and transports. I hope his appointment as commander-in-chief on the coast of America may be agreeable to him.

Yours ever most truly,
T. G.

¹ Conjecture : the signature, in initials only, is far from distinct.

FROM ADMIRAL CHARLES STIRLING

20 Grosvenor Square, 17 July, 1806.

Dear Sir,—I do not like to interrupt business by sending up my name, and therefore I beg leave in this manner to remind you of Captain Warren and the charts, with observations from the Hydrographic Office respecting places I may be destined for. Whether the compliment paid by my intended appointment will be beneficial must depend on circumstances that I cannot foresee, but whatever is the result I shall always remember your nomination with gratitude, as I am convinced it proceeded from a desire to do me good, and flatters me with a hope that I may continue in your recollection.

My object always was to be comptroller of the navy, and I should have shown my wish more publicly if I had supposed Nicholls would have relinquished the situation. If I had succeeded I should have been completely happy, as, besides enjoying the society of my family, I should have had constant employ in a way that I have the vanity to think I could have been useful. When I found, however, Thompson was appointed, I looked to the West Indies as a place where men of interest would not apply to go, but never entertained an idea of going second to such a distant region as the last, with no very bright prospects. Be that as it may, I am willing to go on any required service,

Yours

and will strive every nerve to execute my mission. I wish it had been thought proper to have allowed me to meet the *Glory* in my change of ships, not only on account of my captain and officers, but as the inconvenience I feel and foresee, notwithstanding a cutter has been sent for my baggage, can hardly be felt by a second person. The only thing now to be done there is to require to know as near as possible the actual time intended for my departure.

Lord Howick desired me to wait in town till he saw me again, which alone keeps me here, and prevents me taking advantage of being at my home when absent from my ship. So soon as his lordship finishes with me, I shall be glad to take you by the hand to assure you personally of my sense of your goodness, and that I am, dear sir,

Your most faithful and obedient servant,
CHARLES STIRLING.

Plymouth Dock, 29th July, 1806.

Dear Sir,—I was yesterday favoured with your letter of the 26 ultimo, and although, as I before told you, I feel flattered and obliged by your proposing me to Lord Howick, I cannot help wishing I had been allowed to remain in the Channel fleet, in preference to the service I am destined for. It is however my duty to go where ordered, and although my prospects are not very bright, I hope for the best.

I find there are not any letters sent here to the *Glory* for Captain Warren and my officers, but suppose they may be gone through the commander-in-chief. Pray do not forget the chart and direction for the places I am bound to, as all my father's collection as well as my own [was] destroyed by shipwreck, and fire since, and I did not make any purchases in London from knowing you could

wish me to be supplied with better than I could procure.

Diadem, off Monte Video, 22nd March, 1807.

My dear Sir,—I find myself so exceedingly unwell in this climate, and am so perfectly satisfied I shall not be better and able to conduct my business in a manner that will be useful to my country if I remain here, that I have written to the admiralty to be superseded, and I request most earnestly you will do me the favour to give your support in having me recalled. You may recollect I was unfortunate in not liking this place from the moment you was so good to procure me this appointment, and I would not have come here on any consideration if I could with propriety have declined it. How unfortunate for me that Sir Thomas Troubridge has not assumed his command, or somebody followed me from England. You must have many people desirous of serving. Do not then punish a willing person, whose greatest misfortune is too much anxiety for the public good, but let me leave this command with Captain Rowley if an admiral cannot immediately be found, for my health will not let me stay with any degree of comfort to myself, or benefit to the state. I expected Sir Samuel Hood would have come here from the reports we had, or I would have requested by the Leda to have been superseded.

In my letter to your board, as well as one to Lord Howick, which you may probably see, I have mentioned everything necessary for general information, and indeed told all that I know. I cannot sufficiently deplore General Craufurd not coming here, or the business would have been concluded, whereas everything depends on chances, which will multiply against us.

An agent victualler and a regular establishment

for a dockyard if this is to be a naval station are much wanted. I have merely appointed a store-keeper, and shall not do more, or buy more, than is absolutely necessary until there are orders from home ; and you may be assured I will not put one shilling of government money in my pocket, or allow anybody else to do so if I can help it. What a wonderful difference there is between controlling departments and having all the business to do myself, for I literally cannot find people on whom I can depend to make purchases, or assist me in doing so, and the very idea causes anxiety, which would be considerably relieved if there were people about me on whom I could depend.

With every wish for your happiness, believe me to be, my dear sir, &c.

Diadem, off Monte Video, 30 July, 1807.

My dear Sir,—I perceive great and extraordinary changes at home, and fancy Sir Home Popham's influence has occasioned sentiments in some of our rulers not very favourable to me, although I can repeat with safety that I never gave him cause of offence.

I sent home, on being superseded by Admiral Murray, a journal of my whole proceedings, with copies of all my accounts, from which my superiors may form a judgment on my conduct as effectually as can be had from information, and I feel conscious there never was an admiral more desirous to meet the wishes of government or a squadron conducted with more economy whilst the ships were kept efficient.

In the prize concern, I flatter myself I must be considered as disinterested, and that I only risk reproof for not making more.

The unfortunate result of operations in this river

are dreadful, and the only consolation I have in the misfortune of my country is that no censure can possibly attach to me, either from my counsel or withholding my opinion, or otherwise.

I hope your family are well, and believe me, with much esteem, my dear sir, &c.

Monte Video, 27 September, 1807.

My dear Sir,—I wrote to Lord Howick by the *Diomede* and by this conveyance, and have nothing particular to say in addition respecting this country to what is contained in those letters and my letters to the admiralty and to you. I wish most heartily government had not been so egregiously deceived, because the war should have been abandoned, or a very large force sent here. The people seem so inimical to us that success becomes daily more uncertain, and I have strong doubts whether the advantages expected from taking Buenos Ayres would compensate for the great expense and keeping such a force as would be necessary from other service. I have never liked the appearance of things since my first arrival in the river, and would sacrifice a great deal to get away, independent of the score of health.

The squadron is in want of repairs, stores, ships, provisions, of proper people to make purchases, and of almost every other requisite; and my not having any orders, but those merely addressed to a senior officer, tend to make things more unpleasant. I will, however, do all I can to meet the wishes of government, although an economical plan is unpopular, and increases difficulties, which become more disagreeable from want of reinforcements not allowing the army to advance.

The repulse at Colonia on the 22nd may do some good, but I do not like an active Frenchman

taking the lead. This man, with another, came here in a neutral, and I detained them for three days until orders were given for their reception on shore. Unfortunately they slipped through the hands of the police, and may cause much trouble, as troops may cross over from Buenos Ayres to this side and back again without our being able to prevent them, although we may oblige them to take a circuitous route. I mention this circumstance in case of misrepresentation [*rubbed out*].

I earnestly hope my request to be removed hence as expressed in my letter by the *Diomede* will be attended to, as I certainly shall not be able to answer the purposes required if kept here.

Believe me to be, with much esteem, my dear sir, &c.

P.S.—I just hear from the general that Liniers has written us a most insolent letter, but I have not got the translation to send to the admiralty. I am sure he has no occasion to be uncivil.

[The two previous letters are only signed by Admiral Stirling; the above is written evidently by himself, and is often difficult to read.]

FROM CAPTAIN CORBET

Néréide, off Monte Video, August 1st, 1807.

My dear Admiral,—You desire me to write to you, so thank yourself for the trouble of reading. You, I understand, still get them cheap, but they can be worth nothing to you who have so many, and such good opportunities of getting informed of everything going on. Néréide has been honoured by carrying a flag and both commanders-in-chief to action. Very little information I gained by so doing. I unreservedly say to you what I think, considering you (as I have reason to do) my best friend, and if you consider that I have no right to think, why I know you will forgive.

When we arrived here everything was arranged, and we were to walk through Buenos Ayres, thence to Santa Fé, Cordova, and so on through the continent of South America. The landing-place was fixed on, and nothing was to be done but move on. The army was capable of taking Buenos Ayres with little loss; but it seems that, although we had in the army two field officers, who had been taken there and had resided there for months, we did not know that there were two, and but two, posts in the whole town that were commanding situations, and of course desirable ones. The two subdivisions of the army that by accident stumbled on these posts kept them, and got terms from the enemy for the rest of the army—at least for a great part of them that were beaten or taken; for 2,000 out of the 7,000

were not thought worth while to bring into the town and were left behind a day's march, entirely out of the fight.

Now had these two posts been attacked by grand divisions of the army they would have been, of course, carried with little loss. One of them is close to the river where artillery ought to have been landed, and the enemy would have been foiled in his plan of house-fighting. Indeed, in the posts themselves there was artillery enough taken to have done the business without landing any, and the citadel must have surrendered in twenty-four hours. But the army entered the town in such small subdivisions that they were wasted away by a galling fire and soon rendered impotent. They were besides desired to get possession of churches and large buildings, which was certainly wrong, in as such wise as that an assailant has no business entrenched; it was clearly proved there, for no party that went into a church came out again but as prisoners; they were surrounded with cannon and the roofs beaten in upon them. After all, we certainly had the means of carrying the citadel and town, but they had 1,200 of our best men prisoners, and had cooped them up in the citadel where our fire must have been directed. Our loss was likewise very severe, far greater than the enemy's loss. The admiral was in *Néréide*, in little more than her own draught of water, at about ten miles off the town. I had wished to have been employed a little further in shore with the gun-boats, but that was given to Captain Thompson, of the *Fly*, who certainly conducted it very well. Now when the army were in this scrape the general sends his terms in without any communication with the admiral concerning them, and when concluded on sends for the admiral to come on shore and sign the treaty that he

had no hand in making, and that does not mention anything about his fleet or anything concerning him.

Now I doubt much the necessity of his signing it. I am sure the Spaniards would not have insisted on it, and if not necessary it was better undone. Every assistance that could be rendered the army they had from him. They were very well landed, but I think they might have been landed two days' march nearer the town, which in such a marshy country would have been a great thing. They were supplied, and their ordnance was ready for them before they wanted it. Then why should he (for their blunders on shore) be obliged to sign a disgraceful business, not at all concerning him?

Now the bad points over, let us look at the bright side. We have gained a loss in being beaten out of this country. Had we succeeded in carrying the town, the enemy have force (particularly cavalry) enough to have prevented you from receiving supplies from the country. The inhabitants (except the fighting ones) had long before left the town. You must have been subsisted by the ships, which could not have lasted long, and you would have in the end have made worse terms and been obliged to evacuate the country when more short of provisions than now. The inveteracy of the inhabitants is insurmountable, and by people of a different religion this country cannot be conquered. Our army are half (or more) Catholics, and every one would desert, so that the enemy need not fight at all, and even that they appear to have done with enthusiasm and bigotry, if not with bravery and steadiness. You have all to thank the most gross misinformation of one person for our misfortunes here. I am told, by people who ought to know, that the information concerning this country that has misled the ministry and betrayed the mercantile interest so completely

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was all attained during a communication with the land of South America of not more than thirty-six or forty-eight hours. As to the assistance we found here in guides or people acquainted with the country I am convinced that coming from sea as perfect strangers we would have done as well if not better. Now, my dear admiral, remember that you desired this, but if I have thought too much tell me so and forgive me. I believe I am to remain behind here for some time. In possession of *Néréide* I do not care where; or can I ever forget how I got possession, or cease to be your most faithfully attached

ROBERT CORBET.

Our admiral is adored by us all, and we feel much for the unhappy termination of his command.

My best wishes await Mrs. M. and your family, though I may not have the honour of her remembrance.

FROM CAPTAIN THOMAS HAMILTON

Rotterdam, 19th March [1803].

My dear Friend,—We sailed from Harwich Sunday evening, the packets having been detained a week by strong easterly winds, and arrived at Helvoet, Monday, at 3 P.M.

We found riding there two French frigates, *la Furieuse*, of forty guns, and an eight-and-twenty, with thirteen sail of transports from five to three hundred tons burthen, for the reception of between four and five thousand men destined to take possession of Louisiana. The civil officers of the colony are part embarked, and the troops are ordered for embarkation. Hitherto no possible delusion on their conduct in these parts.

There are two line-of-battle ships, one of eighty and the other sixty-four guns, at Helvoet, both new and seemingly fine ships, with two frigates. They have been very busy in constructing a basin and dock for line-of-battle ships, a considerable work which I was told will be finished this year.

A worse situation could scarcely have been chosen, for the shoalness of the water precludes all certainty and despatch in sailing to and from Helvoet, more especially in large ships.

The French influence is not diminished, though the motive is changed from hope to fear. There is no disguise in the general expression of hatred towards France which pervades all ranks of people ;

but in the event of a war, France will not derive the less benefit from Holland from her disinclination to become a party.

At Rotterdam two frigates are building and some small vessels laid up. No extraordinary activity anywhere visible. I purpose visiting the west coast, where the fishing vessels proper for the transport of troops are chiefly employed, and be guided by the information I receive from M. Liston for my future conduct, though I apprehend nothing useful is to be acquired here.

The Louisiana expedition is stopped and 15,000 men directed to be in readiness to march into Holland. I presume notwithstanding the activity of France nothing effective for an invasion of England can be in readiness within two months, when the season will begin to be adverse to their projects. Believe me, dear sir,

Yours very truly,
THO. HAMILTON.

22 March, Hague.

My dear Friend,—During the three last days I have made excursions upon the coast from Scheveningen towards Catwick, and find there near eighty boats well calculated for the purpose of invasion. I understand the entire number between Holland Hook and the Texel is near two hundred. Upon an average they are capable to receive from fifty to sixty men; their complement of seamen is six—the skipper, four men and a boy. I suspect nothing less persuasive than the bayonet would induce the Dutch to assist in such an adventure as the invasion of England, where their property and life are at stake, and not a hope more consoling than an English prison for their prospect

I cannot but think that in the event of a war, independent of humanity, our policy will be to assure the liberty of fishing to the Dutch, with all protestations of good will and regret.

There are many rational persons here who do not scruple to express their wishes that the navy of the States was destroyed, and consider their treaty offensive and defensive with France against England which was concluded under the Directory, and has not been renewed with the consular government, as not binding; yet they all admit the necessity of present submission to the will of France.

Notwithstanding the opinion of Sir Sidney Smith, I have very little apprehension on the score of invasion from Holland, except as following a successful landing on the Kent and Sussex coasts.

I have been a good deal in society with the French of the *état-major* of the Louisiana expedition, which is extremely well appointed. I feel certain that France has never made a hostile movement towards us; the officers all agree that a war with England would be extremely disagreeable to the army, whose welfare and good opinion the first consul cannot on any occasion neglect.

They observe that we have given the lie direct to the *exposé* and *qu'il a fait une grande sottise!*

A very intelligent man at the head of the customs for Louisiana told me that in the event of a war St. Domingo must be evacuated; and it is very possible Rochambeau would make peace with the negroes and attack Jamaica as the only alternative left him.

I am very sorry to know that the mathematical and mechanical sciences are cultivated with unremitting attention by the French; which, aiding their military practice, will give them an incalculable advantage in the field, and in time may check our

superiority by sea if we neglect a similar culture. I wish with all my heart you could give the appointment of the chaplains of the navy to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, requiring the knowledge of elementary geometry and mechanics as a necessary condition, with an agreement to instruct the young gentlemen on board, who must pay for their education. The chaplains in the dock-yards should likewise read lectures on mechanics and hydraulics. We are shamefully ignorant in these points, and their importance is not sufficiently known and felt for that reason.

I am told the mode of sending a person to contract for timber is condemned as inexpedient, and that we were imposed on in purchasing hemp in Russia from a similar misconduct; the reason assigned is that such a practice has the effect of a public crier, making known your wants, with his ability and interest to make a speedy purchase; without either the character or habitual honesty of a well-established house to regulate his conduct, or their importance and judgment to resist imposition and develop the fraudulent intricacy to which the inexperience of a stranger is necessarily exposed.

I feel, however, that my information, if it be such, proceeds from those whose interests are preferred in the comparison.

I purpose remaining here till something decisive is known; a continuation of the peace is the general wish and I think the prevailing opinion.

You have no doubt a list of the Dutch navy: fifteen of the line, and thirteen frigates building and in repair.

Hague, April 4th.

My dear Friend,—Since I wrote to you last I have visited Amsterdam and its environs. I, with the

assistance of Mr. Hope, who paid ample attention to your recommendation, saw everything worth seeing. Plodding industry and political discontent pervade the nation. They deprecate a war, in which they must be involved without one consoling ray to cheer the gloom that surrounds them; nothing but unnecessary injury from us will force them to act with France with the least cordiality.

Nevertheless it is to be feared that continued misfortune may, in the event of a war followed by the discontent which inevitably attends great losses, cause a strong party to seek a union with France, as preferable to an independent name with all the expense of a government, and without any of the advantages of one either with respect to the rulers or the people, there being neither honour nor protection to be found in their present degraded state. Their habits of good order are their civil security.

May it not be the policy of France to give more weight to the supposed caprice of the first consul than it deserves, to prevent the irregularities of their conduct being noticed, for fear of hasty consequences? I have tried to acquire a just notion of his character, which I understand is subtle, penetrating, suspicious, and revengeful.

We must recollect that Bonaparte owes his ambition to fortune, not his fortunes to ambition. He cannot have long foreseen the elevated situation in which he is placed, nor yet forget the means through which he attained it. When called from Egypt, the dawn of his present splendour may have first opened to his imagination. His conduct since his usurpation has been, generally speaking, suited to his situation, and has procured him the tranquil submission of the French nation, from his high fortunes contributing so essentially to flatter their predominant passions—the love of glory, and the love of pleasure. He

ended their convulsive career with the prospect of internal tranquillity and political influence, but these national passions are now transferred from the court to the camp, and war alone can preserve the love of glory in an army which is no longer supported by the habitual enthusiasm of an aristocracy devoted from their infancy to sacrifice every consideration at its shrine.

Peace, therefore, appears to me the most probable means to destroy the hydra ; the vanity of the nation will want concentration ; a point of union, and a rivalry in the love of pleasure will soon erase the influence of military achievements in a plebeian army, without either the pride of birth or republican virtue to cherish its continuance. War, on the contrary, will fix their military habitudes, and finally render their political existence incompatible with that of other European nations, who cultivate commercial industry as the most beneficial mode of civilisation.

At present I confess I cannot see any external power sufficient to control them. Their army wish for war, but not with us. Egypt has rendered respectable in their eyes the gallantry and conduct of our army, and they fear the great gulf placed betwixt us and them ; besides, the destruction of their colonial projects is equally hurtful to the interested sense of the people, or the ambition of the government. As such I suspect they will make the necessary painful concessions, for the present ; but the wounded pride of the first consul will for ever fix in his breast an implacable hatred towards us, and which I trust will ultimately do him injury in the opinion of the French nation if we continue to show a dignified unambitious conduct ; which I trust will appear to have never been more happily exhibited than on the present occasion.

I have already heard frequent very free censures on the absurdity of his declaration that England was not singly equal to cope with France.

He has no national prejudices of education, or even of long habit, in his favour to counteract the disgust that would follow mismanagement or misfortune; every *faux pas* will diminish the gratitude at present *à la mode de la nation*, and his downfall may be as rapid as his exaltation.

You are no doubt informed of the state of Flushing and the armaments there of small vessels, but nothing indicative of active hostile preparation has yet appeared in this vicinity. I speak of France, for the Dutch do not stir.

I have waited the arrival of the packet and leave this place for Dort, in my way to Paris. There is nothing worth notice here.

Our mode of purchasing timber is universally condemned by the merchants. Believe me, dear sir, &c.

Dort, 6th April.

My dear Friend,—I write to you whilst a conversation I have had with Mr. Van der Schoor is still fresh in my memory relative to the mode of purchasing timber for the use of the navy. The timber merchants make their purchase either jointly or severally, and assemble the timber at Dort, where they make their final settlements with each other as suits their mutual interests, or determine by lot the preference of choice when their views interfere with each other.

As there is great variety in the size and quality of the oak timber, the Dutch admiralty appoint a surveyor to choose what he deems suitable for the building ships of war, rejecting what he disapproves. The merchant has the remaining part of the lot to

dispose of as he judges proper, but after the surveyor has determined upon the purchase, no return is admitted ; by this means no timber is bought but what is useful, and the consumption is limited to the actual demand. Nothing appears so absurd as for us to purchase timber in the wholesale—I mean bad and good together, which enhances the price by the increased demand of quantity, and we have the loss of freight, besides various additional losses, before the useless timber is disposed of, and not a foot more in our dockyards for the use of the service. The nominal quantity will be less and the price higher, but the expense much reduced, by purchasing only what is picked out by an intelligent person as fit for our construction.

Paris, April 13th.

My dear Friend,—I have been two days in this city, and yesterday conversed with Lord Whitworth for a considerable time relative to the subject of my mission. He assured me (and I am perfectly convinced of the fact) that every story of hostile armament on the part of France relating to an invasion of England is totally void of foundation, and I have little doubt that some person who would create a self-importance has been suggesting ideas to minds too well prepared for their reception, &c., &c. I am happy to recollect that you doubted the reality as well as myself when I mentioned to you my suspicion that I was sent out of the way. This letter of course is to you, for I have nothing to communicate of a professional nature ; as for pretending to make farther enquiries 'tis absolutely impossible. I may tell you in general terms that peace is the wish of everybody of all descriptions that I have conversed with, and that we have much more to dread on the part of France from the Mediterranean

than the Channel, &c. At Toulon they are completing docks, stores, and making large purchases of timber, hemp, &c.

The French are too wise not to feel their advantage in that quarter, where they are subject to little opposition compared to what they would meet with from us considering Brest as the focus of their maritime projects. I wish with all my heart they had their squadron *en route* for Louisiana ; the more employment they have abroad the more security we have for tranquillity at home, and their military *furor* will gradually die away.

I shall be obliged to you to let me know what is the intention of your board in my regard. If the peace continues I should have great pleasure in procuring information (for a few months) upon any subject you may wish to appoint that may be deemed useful.

Visiting their arsenals is out of the question, as I am told one cannot stir without a passport. The French ambassador at the Hague asked me, 'Et bien, Mr. Hamilton, avez-vous bien vu des armements hostiles en l'Hollande ?' I answered, 'Assuredly not.' He smiled at my arrival at the Hague and no doubt saw the nature of my journey. Our ministers totally disavow any communication relative to hostile armament, and surely 'tis a little extraordinary to take an important step upon mere suggestion, whence information is so easily obtained. Enthusiasts, my dear sir, are excellent actors, but most mischievous counsellors. You will make the application when 'tis meant, I have no doubt, for your penetration is quick and your judgment sound. Lord W. told me of the arrival of Captain Wright through Havre without much approbation, though considerable admiration.

If I am to return I will pay due attention to any

commands *de la part de madame*, that you may wish ; ladies love bargains, and I can have any purchases made here by respectable acquaintance. Believe me, dear sir, with much regard, &c.

My dear friend /—/ denotes that I mean what I say.

My dear friend , , denotes attention to the key.

The key is simply this : a number written at length, as seven, twelve, forty-nine, and *c* refers to the article opposite the number expressed ; thus we were twelve at table, twelve, many ships of the line in a state of repair at Brest, the number of ships signified by the number of the line, counting from the first line of the letter.

One.—Timber and hemp are very scarce.

Two.—They have a store for years' consumption : the number of years is denoted by the line of the page the word two is written in, the store is timber and hemp.

Three.—There is a squadron fitting for an expedition : the name of the place of designation will be mentioned in the third line of the last page.

Four.—They are building many frigates.

Five.—They are building many corvettes.

Six.—They are building gun-boats.

Seven.—They have extra troops opposite Jersey sufficient to attempt a surprise in constant preparation.

Eight.—Sailors are very discontented.

Nine.—I understand from good authority that St. Domingo will be evacuated.

Ten.—Nothing denotes hostility to us.

Eleven.—The transport ships are of considerable burthen, too large for the purpose of invasion.

Twelve.—Many ships of the line in a state of repair at Brest : the number of the ships signified by

the number of the line counting from the first line of the letter.

Thirteen.—Their attention is given chiefly to the construction and repair of ships of the line.

Fourteen.—The squadron just before mentioned is not destined for the place reported, but for the place mentioned in the fifth line of the last page.

Fifteen.—Since the 9th of March considerable numbers of troops have been marched to the sea coasts of Holland and Flanders.

Sixteen.—Do. of Normandy.

Seventeen.—Do. of Brittany.

Eighteen.—I believe the people of the country averse to war with England.

Nineteen.—I find it difficult to comply with the nature and intention of my mission.

Twenty.—Are sending artillery and warlike stores to the coast.

Thursday, 7 P.M.

My dear Sir,—I can now safely assure that Jerome Bonaparte is anywhere but at Portsmouth. Our examination is complete in all its parts. The poor Jerome was titled in America; he is a St. Domingo planter, and, though something of the size and complexion, has nothing of the physiognomy. Captain M——'s letter I can make nothing of. Who his hero was he best knows, but it could not have been Jerome, who never was in a battle, except at the capture of the Swiftsure. The emperor left him at Guadaloupe the 1st of July. I did not wish to ask the planter if he knew Captain M——y. He told us at Admiral Montagu's that he was supposed to be J. B., and regretted the trifling resemblance, but exclaimed He has no beard; and the planter had a most formidable one.

Admiral Montagu told me he had asked leave to

discharge the ship. I presume there can be no doubt that the whole is a misapprehension, invention, or a dupery on the part of the Americans to turn our views a wrong way.

I shall see you in the morning next after you receive this, and will talk more fully than I write.

Captain Thesiger adopted the same plan I did—to introduce Jerome's servant to his supposed master, with the promise for him to again belong to him; but the man laughed and said, 'That gentleman is not like my master.' I promise you there is no deception. The planter will be sent to Odiham on parole.

July 4th.

My dear Sir,—I wrote to Sir Rupert George yesterday, after my landing from a three days' examination of Lundy Island, to say I should proceed to Tiverton and wait there till I received his answer, which will decide whether I am to return from whence I came or proceed to town.

My letter was accompanied by a hasty sketch of the merits of the island, which, though not official, I suppose he will think proper to communicate to Lord Hobart, as a pier and road to the top of the island are absolutely requisite, previous to the erection of barracks, prison, &c., &c., as all the materials for building must be carried to the island excepting stone.

I suspect it will not supply sufficient water without the aid of tanks, which might be formed from the quarries dug for building. I searched every part of the island, as far as accessible, for three days, and the only streams I could perceive, or very interested intelligence could show me, were three rills not an inch in diameter each, after a very wet spring. The island itself is admirably calculated for a prison, depôt for recruits, or convicts for Botany Bay, and it

appears to me that excepting the supposed deficiency of water, and possibly a difficulty of supplying a large number with provisions in the winter, which would render a two months' store of salt provisions advisable, there are no objections to government following [*torn*] views relative to the island.

Thursday, [20th January, 1804 (?)].

Dear Sir,—The enclosed I have just received from Mr. Roberts.

You will see the expense in future, if you adopt this method, will be very trifling compared with the importance of the object.

Enclosure.

Woolwich Yard [Monday], 17th January, 1804.

Dear Sir,—On the other side I have sent you the comparative expense of the pumps for forcing water in the *Illustrious*, and two hand pumps as usually fitted. I have noted every article belonging to the pumps, and think considerable reduction of the copper tubing may be made, and without the least inconvenience. Suppose it went forth above the lower gun-deck, and with a small cap scuttled, twelve feet of tubing would be saved, and I confess I see no use whatever in more. If it was all away, no great matter, and the hose pointed through the decks and screwed on upon the copper leader—that as may be found expedient.

Would Captain Markham like a drawing of the pump upon a large scale? I shall be glad to know if any more are to be fitted, as the alterations I propose I should wish to superintend. I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

THOS. ROBERTS.

Captain Hamilton.

Enclosure from Captain Hamilton.

	Forcing pumps fitted on board H.M.S. Illustrious	Two common hand pumps as usually fitted
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Hand pumps . . .	Two of 20 feet 4 0 0	Two of 32 feet 12 16 0
Brass chambers . .	Two . . . 4 0 0	Two . . . 4 0 0
Hoops and stanchions		3 0 0
Brakes, &c. . . .	1 3 4	0 10 0
Spears	4 0 0	1 0 0
Boxes, common . .	0 3 0	0 3 0
Pistons	0 12 0	
Brass leaders with valves, &c. . . .	5 18 0	
Twenty feet of cop- per pipe (or tubing) with brass flanges, screws and bolts complete	10 19 0	
	Total . . 30 15 4	Total . . 21 9 0
	10 19 0	
	19 16 4	

N.B.—The twenty feet of copper tubing Sir Charles Hamilton and myself think unnecessary; the comparative expense will then be 19*l.* 16*s.* 4*d.* —21*l.* 9*s.* 0*d.* I find by looking over the contracts for pumps, that the thirty-two feet 4*s.* per foot only and the twenty feet 2*s.* per foot.

1805.

My dear Sir,—I have just received a copy of Captain Moore's report on the Fame's rudder. I am to request you will order the model to be sent for from Deptford.

There was not any part of my instructions complied with.

The navy board was directed to communicate with me, which was never done, and I never knew of the tiller being but half length till I heard at Woolwich that the tiller was little more than half

the length, and the wheel and tiller rope the common dimensions.

I told Sir William Rule in writing that I would not hold any mechanical communication with the navy board without an order for that purpose. The surveyors are too ignorant to do anything right in mechanics, and too proud to take counsel or pay attention to others.

The enclosed note from Mr. Peake will show you that no omission on my part produced the unpleasant state of steering Captain Moore describes; however, there is no difficulty in the case.

The rudder is the size below of an ordinary rudder, and has a third from flotation taken off. When the model comes before you, I request to attend to explain the objects to be attained. I am, dear sir, &c.

Deptford Yard, 23rd July, 1805.

Dear Sir,—I have been favoured with your note of Friday last. By the bearer you will receive a sketch of the after-part of the *Fame*, as you desire. I feel much obliged for your offer to apply for trial to be made on your rudder by fixing a segment on its head so as to enable the beams of the upper deck to be patterned quite to the transom, but as I wish to avoid giving our affectionates any cause for displeasure, I wish to decline until they may have seen it—approved or disapproved. Thanks for your trust with respect to the strength of the tiller rope or chain. I was aware that the rope, &c., must be strong in proportion to shortening the tiller.

If you shorten the tiller one half I most perfectly agree with you that [the] wheel should be a common one with a whip purchase. Dear sir,

Your very obedient servant,

HENRY PEAKE.

Notes.

The objects to be obtained from deepening the hold are, to acquire a proper flotation with sufficient stability.

The *Hibernia*, with four months' stores and provisions on board, carries her midship port but 4 feet 7 inches above flotation, whereas a first-rate ought to carry her midship port nearly 6 feet.

Your report states the hanging of the *Caledonia's* deck to be 1 foot $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches whilst the *Charlotte's* deck has 2 feet 2 inches. Now by giving a curvature of deck to the *Charlotte* similar to that of the *Caledonia*, the hanging of the *Charlotte's* deck will be nearly 1 foot 6 inches, as she is 15 feet shorter than the *Caledonia*. By this alteration 8 inches depth of hold is procured, and by increasing of the side 7 inches, the 15 inches additional as directed.

The increased weight of hull will be about ten tons, which is nearly equivalent to the immersion of half an inch, which is not an object of consideration.

We entirely agree with you that an easy draft of water is desirable on all accounts, and therefore submit to your consideration whether the keels and false keels should not be confined, as the French first-rates are, to 20 inches, and by doing away riders and all unnecessary top weight, which demands a counterpoise of ballast without increasing the stability but considerably immersing the ship, produce a draft of water no greater than sufficient to insure stability.

Eighty tons of ballast will sink the *Charlotte* nearly 4 inches, and more than counteract the effect of raising the gun, &c., 11 inches, and insure her a sufficient height of midship port when under sail,

and when laid up will draw only half an inch more in consequence of her increased depth.

As the dimensions of the *Caledonia* are nearly equal to those of the *Commerce de Marseilles*, except in the depth of hold, which is 1 foot 9 inches less in the *Caledonia*, your addition of 1 foot 3 inches will still leave 6 inches superiority to the French first-rate in this dimension, but the keel and false keels of the *Caledonia* are deeper by nearly 9 inches than those of the French first-rates, which of course must be attended to. If the keel of the new ship be only as deep as the keel of the *Commerce de Marseilles*, she will then draw about 4 inches less water than the *Caledonia*. If any objection is made, you perceive the force of this answer, for your order will be less bad than their own contrivance by 4 inches! If lying at the moorings be spoken of, the weight of 15 inches additional depth is about 34 tons, not 2 inches draft of water at the moorings when laid up, and their keels is near nine!

Your taking away the poops of second-rates is of more use with respect to lying with strain at their moorings than 6 feet additional depth would do harm.

The removal of a poop with regard to sailing and strain at sea is of still greater advantage; you gain about one-tenth of the whole stability of the ship, and in the pitching and obstacle to headway when under low sail, the ease and velocity are necessarily augmented.

I thank heaven, my dear sir, that your firmness is likely to destroy the malign influence of the Goths and Vandals.

You have my hearty esteem and admiration.

In answer to your note just received. As the

additional depth of hold of 15 inches ordered for the first-rates will occasion an additional draft of water of about 5 inches, to prevent an unnecessary draft of water care must be taken to reduce the depth of the keel to 20 inches below the rabbit, which is the depth given to the French first-rates. The 20 inches is to include the false keel.

My dear Sir,—You are quite right that the paul is of no use whatever except to catch the rudder after it has lifted. But we have very few officers who have the slightest mechanical taste. Moore writes me word that he sails the *Fame* 3 feet 9 inches by the stern.

The object of my rudder was to determine that the upper part which receives the shock from a sea is of use in steering the ship, and that the mainpiece of the rudder need not be of near the size which is now found necessary on account of the mortice to receive the tiller, and is of a size scarce to be found.

These and saving the rudder when striking are objects of importance.

Don't take the trouble to send Peake's letter, but, if you please, burn it.

I am directed to acquaint you, in answer to your request to be informed what objects are proposed to be obtained by deepening the hold, and as directed by ——— letter.

The objects to be obtained are increased capacity, a due height of the lower deck ports from flotation, with sufficient stability.

The *Hibernia*, with four months' stores and provisions on board and sufficient stability, carries her midship port but 4 feet 7 inches above flotation, whereas a first-rate ought to carry her midship port 5 feet 10 inches.

You report that the hanging of the *Charlotte's* deck is 2 feet 2 inches, whilst the *Caledonia's*, 15 feet longer, is but 1 foot $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches ; now if the *Charlotte's* deck has a similar curvature with the *Caledonia's*, it will hang nearly 1 foot 6 inches, which will deepen the hold 8 inches, to which add 7 inches in the construction of the ship, the hold will be deepened 15 inches, and the weight of the additional frame and planking will weigh about ten tons, which will sink the ship little more than half an inch at her moorings, and at sea eighty additional tons of ballast will give her sufficient stability and raise her midship port about 10 inches.

My dear Sir,—One should not lose a thought for want of communicating it.

The riders are twice the weight increased depth of hold would occasion ; 'tis surprising the wise heads never found out that adding fifty tons would sink a ship twice as much as deepening her hold one foot would occasion ; or that 10 inches additional keel would occasion her at least six times more additional draft than the above depth of hold.

Their sins are as white as snow, yours of the deepest scarlet.

Sin on, for heaven's sake, I pray you.

My dear Sir,—The *Charlotte* has 2 feet 2 inches hanging of deck, the *Caledonia* 1 foot $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Now if the hanging of the *Charlotte* be reduced to the same curve of the *Caledonia's* deck, there will be about 1 foot 6 inches for the *Charlotte*, and to a depth of hold 8 inches gained by straightening the deck ; add to this 7 inches in her construction, which will altogether produce the 15 inches required, and not occasion her to draw half an inch more water.

My dear Admiral,—I am just returned from Mr. Barrilli. We have examined the plan of the Carnatic, which I believe similar to that of the Leviathan. I find Barrilli so absorbed in theory that he has made many mistakes as to facts, and in practical knowledge he is certainly deficient. I find the Carnatic but 48 instead of 48 feet 6 inches, and has the necessary depth by simply straightening the deck 6 inches. I never was better pleased in my life to find that without any alteration that the surveyors have not both adopted, you have a 74 perfect for 32 and 18 pounders. I pledge myself that there is not a possible improvement to be made, her lines are admirable, her tonnage moderate, her qualities known and approved. The hanging of her deck has 2 feet fortunately, which leaves more than either of the surveyors now adopt. I pledge myself to Lord Howick that the ship in question is exactly fit for a British 74, and that 600 men are sufficient, though twenty more would make the labour light.

If the Leviathan is a Carnatic I am fixed.

5 P.M., N.O.

My dear Admiral,—You will receive an answer relative to the Amsterdam storeship that I suspect will not suit your enquiries. I suppose you mean that the Eurus should contain part of the stores rather than deposit them at Kinsale, unless Haulbowline Island may answer that purpose, which is not insinuated in your letter.

My minute and consequent letter to this effect was torn by the comptroller, and that you will receive substituted written by him.

Every hour's experience confirms my opinion that you are the only man I know, seaman by profession, who unites a logical head, honest heart, and sufficient firmness of mind to conduct the navy board

in its present state. Nevertheless we amend ; Peake is a worthy instrument and gains ground against his absurd opponent. Peake is really an honest, sensible, and impartial man, and the only comfort I have at the board.

As I shall ever write as I speak to you, burn this when read.

17 July, N.O.

My dear Admiral,—As mechanical questions belong to science and not opinion, there can be no impropriety in communication, whatsoever shape it may appear in. Understanding there is a difficulty started against deepening the holds of ships of war, which is the only possible mode of enabling them to carry their ports a sufficient height above the water, unless the other principal dimensions be carried out of prudent bounds, Mr. Peake and myself wish to remove this bugbear by assuring you that the increased draft of water that would follow the addition of 15 inches to the depth of hold of a ship similar to the Royal George would not add more than thirteen tons weight to the ship, and consequently not produce three-quarters of an inch immersion at her moorings when laid up.

As ships sufficient for the purposes of war must be built, and if the shallowness of our harbours requires such nice attention to their draft of water, the remedy, or rather prevention, of the evil must be attained by lightening the top sides as far as may be compatible with strength, and applying no more false keel than is necessary to cover the main keel. Mr. Peake has directed his draftsman to measure the quantity of additional wood, so that the immersion may be known to a fraction. It cannot be more than I have estimated. I have read this letter to Mr. Peake.

TO CAPT. THOMAS HAMILTON 331

Chatham Yard, 22 May, 1806.

Sir,—I have received your memorandum from Captain Hope respecting the greatest draught of water we could dock a ship at in the docks of Chatham.

I can find no ship that has been docked here that has drawn more water than the Victory, her draught being 19 feet 2 inches abaft. The water in the dock, on the day of her docking 18 feet; on the slide 16 feet 9 inches (it being 1 foot 3 inches above the bottom of the dock). Of course the ship sewed abaft 2 feet 5 inches and about 2 feet forward. She came in very well. Ships have been known to sew 3 feet, which of course would have been her case had the tide flowed less. Eighteen feet is thought a fair tide.

And I am, sir, your much obliged and very humble servant,

R. SEPPINGS.

Portsmouth Yard, 30 May, 1806.

Dear Sir,—In answer to your letter of yesterday respecting the ships going out of Portsmouth harbour since I have been here, I made it my study to be acquainted with the coming in and out of harbour. I thought more might be done, but experience has taught me better, ships going out of harbour drawing more than 22 feet 6 inches; it has so happened on the neap tides they cannot get out for want of water. In two instances it was the case; first was the Plantagenet, she drew 22 feet 9 inches, although a memorandum was sent on board to bring her to 22 feet 6 inches. She remained in harbour for two days, and when she went out had only 6 inches more than she drew. The second was the Revenge, at 23 feet. She had only 6 inches more than she drew;

the next day only 23 feet. The generality of the small 74 go out with their guns in. To prevent ships getting too deep we send on board to bring them down to 22 feet 6 inches. Most times they get them to 23 feet. If they were not to bring them down more, she would sail out of harbour with a fair wind before the main tide comes in.

When the spring tides are, a ship drawing 24 feet might go out of harbour provided she has a fresh breeze, but still I think it is running a very great risk, particularly when going against a bore of a tide, which will be the case in the spring. The eddy then runs nearly across the channel on both sides of the harbour mouth; we find a difficulty in steering the ships to prevent their getting ashore, on the Point or Blockhouse. If the wind should be at ENE, when under the lee of the town the wind then becomes variable and ruffling; it is then the difficulty will be to get out of the harbour. But provided a ship of the largest class is taken out of harbour without her guns, not drawing more than 22 feet 6 inches, which was the draft the Sans Pareil and Ville de Paris went out, there can be no difficulty whatever at any time. Supposing her draft to be 23 feet, you must observe, by the instance of the Revenge, what the case may be. At times we have only 22 feet at the neaps.

I am with the greatest respect,

WM. BROWN.

Swinging Moorings with the depth of water when laid up in ordinary.

Number				Fore	Aft
				ft. in.	ft. in.
For first rates	4	size of Ville de Paris		21 9	22 3
second do.	3	do. Dreadnought		21 3	22 2
second do.	4	do. Barfleur	.	21 5	21 0
third do.	5	do. Canada	.	18 4	19 3
third do.	4	do. Saturn	.	17 5	18 6

Ships the length of Sans Pareil would often take the ground in low runs ; the above-named ships would at times. The Sans Pareil nor Ville de Paris were never laid up in this port.

					Fore ft. in.	Aft ft. in.
Sans Pareil	docked at	.	.	.	15 5	18 5
Ville de Paris	do.	.	.	.	16 6	18 6

WM. BROWN.

May 12th.

In addition to our order to you of 10th inst. to increase the depth in the holds of ships of the first and second rates, we have thought it necessary that the depth of their keels be proportionately reduced, and do in consequence direct that as we apprehend the additional depth of hold of 15 inches ordered for the Caledonia will occasion an additional draft of water of about 5 inches, to prevent any unnecessary draft of water care must be taken to reduce the depth of the keel to 20 inches below the rabbet, which is the depth given to the French first-rates ; the 20 inches to include the false keel.

Dear Admiral,—I should sooner have complied with your commands, but that I received on Tuesday the last French publication on the construction of ships. It contains nothing new.

Lord St. Vincent was quite angry with me for saying our 74 ought to carry 24-pounders on the main-deck, as such ships would require increased dimension ; I have therefore only deepened the hold as the other dimensions are amply sufficient.

Dear Sir,—I have received an official communication from the navy board relative to the Fame's rudder.

I wish to send them an extract from Mr. Peake's letter, which I sent to you to prove to them the negligence is all their own.

If you think Peake will be blamed, as I have shown to you my innocence, I am not anxious of clearing myself in the sight of those lynx-eyed gentlemen. Dear sir, &c.

Of course you will not send the letter unless you think I ought to transmit it to the navy board.

My dear Sir,—A conversation I have had with Mr. Tucker produced a letter from his brother, wherein he states 'that the riders being removed from the Caledonia and Union will lighten them 4 inches,' &c. As I told you these riders were given up, which I supposed to be the case, I feel it incumbent on me to draw your attention to the fact stated in Mr. Tucker's letter, and further declare to you that eighty tons iron ballast is necessary to remove the mischief of the riders. If the surveyors persist in such wanton misconduct all your regulations in this regard will prove abortive.

I gave Mr. Tucker the only copy of a letter which I wrote four years since to Sir Andrew Hamond. Pray take the trouble to read it. I sent a copy of it to Sir William Rule, having first read it to Admiral Gambier in the waiting-room of the admiralty, with a declaration that I would never more hold mechanical intercourse with the board without a special order from the admiralty.

Sir William shook me by the hand the next time we met, saying 'he liked a man for speaking out.'

You need not fear hurting his fine feelings.

As I set out for Norman Cross to-morrow I shall not have an opportunity to wait on you.

My dear Sir,—When I mentioned to you the other morning that 24 feet depth of hold was sufficient for our first-rates, my opinion is founded upon the following reasons : nearly one-third part of the depth of hold added will be immersed, and two-thirds out of the water ; consequently by adding 1 foot 8 inches to the present depth, the lower deck will be near 6 feet above water, which I think quite sufficient. Were it higher, the top side would be as a back sail, especially when it blew hard and the low sails could only be set.

This argument still more strongly applies to second-rates, and shows the absolute necessity of keeping them down. This can only be accomplished by building them without poops and adding to their depth of hold. So help me God ! the ignorance of our surveyors has done more mischief to our navy than we shall ever live to see remedied. Our 80-gun ships have near 23 feet depth of hold and our second-rates 21 feet 6 inches. Such palpable absurdity is worthy the contrivers.

I think, my dear sir, you should really lose no time in consulting with the comptroller to rectify the order of the late board of admiralty relative to the Nelson. And there are other three-deckers laid down ; the Charlotte should not have a poop, and if possible add a foot to her depth. Admiral Domett last evening talked over the Royal George, which ship he averred was crank when her ports were 5 feet out of the water ; taking off the poop makes an addition of one-tenth of the whole stability, to say nothing of the back sail.

If I know anything in this world 'tis the theory of construction, which is all founded on the most absolute demonstration ; but to speak on the subject to the surveyors would be cutting blocks with razors. The man who first thought of appointing carpenters

to direct the construction of the navy has a grievous sin to answer for.

If any objections are started, do me the grace to desire they may be given in writing, and let me have the pleasure of exposing the obstinate ignorance of those mules. Ever truly, my dear sir, &c.

My dear Admiral,—I have had this morning a long conversation with Lord St. Vincent relative to the propriety of building ships of three decks with poops. His lordship goes farther than you do, for he would not build a first-rate with a poop.

Dear Sir,—Mr. Roberts called on me yesterday and gave me a particular statement of the pump fitted in the Repulse.

The pump is very good but occupies the space of two hand pumps; this is an objection. The two hand pumps are fitted on the same side. A pump of a similar intention was fitted on board the Sceptre, and Mr. Roberts gave it the preference to this. I had never heard of the Sceptre's pump before.

I would let this go on to trial, and you may get a report from the Sceptre.

My dear Admiral,—A thought occurred to me after I left you that I think may do good. The difference about the poop proceeds, I suspect, more from misconception than any real difference of opinion. Suppose, therefore, the Boyne and Union, the two 98's building after the Victory, were directed to be finished one with and the other without a poop, the question—which is whether the accommodation resulting from a poop is a sufficient compensation for the mischiefs it will occasion?—will be then fairly decided; if one ship is nearly equal to the other in good qualities of stability, lower battery and

sailing by the wind, drifting under low sail, then assuredly the poop is an advantage. If the difference in good qualities is found to be great, I have no doubt the poop will find but few advocates.

My dear Sir,—Your note of yesterday gave me much satisfaction, as I entirely agree with you that a complete statement is what should proceed from you on the subject of the riders.

I have seen Secretary Peake and desired him to consult his brother, who I am persuaded is the most intelligent shipwright in the kingdom.

Your views will be heartily entered into, and I trust yet much good may be done. I could not help reflecting that if Lord St. Vincent would give old Henslow a pension equal to his salary, and appoint Peake in his place, the perverseness of the navy board would be ended perforce. I know from Sir Thomas Troubridge, and I believe yourself, that he is intended by his lordship for the first vacancy. Turn that over in your mind.

You shall have the paper to-morrow, and I hope it will deserve your approbation.

My dear Admiral,—After much hunting the *Egyptienne* is caught. We could not find any source of information here, but at last my friend Blake from Woolwich sent me up a plan he had taken. The ship is only a very large frigate: dimensions, 169 feet 8 inches length, and 43 feet 8 inches extreme breadth, very insufficiently fastened and over-masted forward.

Her head sails are larger than when she was captured! and out of all bounds, which must have strained the ship terribly and hurt her sailing, except in the smoothest water. I have not a doubt that if her mainmast and sails, which are 64, remain as they

are, with 36-gun frigate's forward, and proper fastenings applied, she, being a new ship, or not old, will do admirably, as she has every property except strength which a ship of her description can possess. I likewise recommend this measure to you as a proof of the efficacy of my friend Peake's fastenings, which may be easily applied, and are beyond all compare the best I ever saw or heard of.

[*Private.*]

My dear Admiral,—I know it will give you pleasure to hear that I have been with Sir William Rule in his drawing-room to see the alterations intended for the *Caledonia*; a very near approach to the *San Joseph's* flotation and 24 feet depth of hold.

God prosper oil and damn vinegar.

My dear Sir,—From Lord Howick's speech as delivered in the papers, I presume old Henslow is to do no more mischief.

I am induced to remind you of your *quondam protégé* Roberts. He is as zealous a reformer of dock-yard abuse as any man living, and a more knowing shipwright, and even farther, there is not to be found. I know you are not always able to follow the path your inclination may lead to, but if you have the power to get him named as builder, should there be a vacancy, he will not disgrace your protection.

Accept my congratulations upon your triumph.

August 1st.

My dear Sir,—A worthy clergyman of the name of Shepherd, not rich in aught but good works, has a son bit with the military mania, and his father wishes to place him in the marines.

Your friendship has given me the right to ask you a favour, but I am not of the number of those who think their friends must comply with their requests. I am in debt to you, not you to me ; but as I feel most gratefully disposed towards you, I can have no doubt of good will towards me where your particular views do not interfere. The youth is sixteen and well educated. Will you do me the favour to say if it is probable you can procure his appointment ?

My dear Sir,—After I left you yesterday a thought occurred that the pump in the Centaur was too large for forcing water to any great height, for the pressure is always as the height multiplied by the area of the cylinder where the piston works ; thus if the pump was of a bore $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches, a weight of water equal to 2,100 lbs. must be overcome, plus friction, &c., to raise it 150 feet, or the height of your top-gallant mast. The pump in the Repulse is of that size, and I suspect they will hardly be able to apply force enough to wet sails.

It is not possible to have a great discharge and raise high, therefore a good fire-engine and wetting pump are incompatible in one of the same machine. I told Simpkin I thought his pump too large and proposed a 5-inch, but he was of opinion we could apply force enough.

If you are decidedly of opinion that ships of war should be enabled to wet their sails, I am sure the thing may be done, and if you wish I will consider on a mode, and if I mistake not can find a better engine than the one in use without adding to the expense.

Transport Office, 10 May.

My dear Sir,—The enclosed I have just received from Roberts. I regret much that his prospects are so likely to be confined in their old limits. I must give up my hobby, with my hopes of any permanent good being achieved on this interesting business. What is to be, is to be.

Will you have the goodness to deliver the enclosed to Mr. Grenville; it is relative to Dr. Young's work? If Mr. Grenville deigns to patronise the work, perhaps you may have influence enough to procure the names of the sea lords as subscribers.

My dear Admiral,—I learn that Captain Hope is one of the sea lords. He has said so at this office. I forgot to request you would make my dutiful respects to Mr. Grenville, and you, I think, can answer for the sincerity of my regret on this occasion.

Barlow has been confined this week past or would have waited upon you.

My dear Sir,—The comptroller informed me this morning that a frigate fitted with a forcing-pump (from the Nore) had requested the old mode with the cistern. As I know these pumps have been most unfairly dealt by, this is a good time to examine into their merits. Mr. Roberts you know is surveyor's assistant, and will give all necessary information. All that you ever intended was to have a powerful fire-engine and a means to wet sails occasionally. The washing decks with a hose was Sir Charles Hamilton's contrivance, and is not, I believe, much liked, as more men are required to pump. It might be useful to wash now and then between decks to cleanse the beams, &c.

For a ship's pump when wanted and to fill a tub for washing decks it is as easily worked as a common pump. I always liked the project, and hate the slovenly or mischievous ignorance that will not attend to what is ingenious and useful, nor suffer others to do so.

I shall wait to know if you wish to speak to me.

My dear Admiral,—I am sorry you have had the trouble to send anything like an excuse to me for not introducing me to the first lord on Sunday.

To say the truth, after having written a couple of letters and the clock striking three, I was tempted to say :

'My very good friend, 'tis a very hard task,
That thou must wait here, who have nothing to ask.'

But on reflection doubted whether I had not better keep away, and trust my seeming want of respect to your excuses.

Let me be your foreign minister, and you will on a future day vouch that my desire to be useful was stronger than present vanity. Seriously, I wish to keep in the background for good reasons till all our material points and arrangements are settled, and then God knows I shall wish for the quiet of the background from an utter distaste for the plague of the front. Till you alter, I pledge myself your faithful lieutenant, and if I guess right we play the same honest game, which requires aid and cajoling. I only desire to be believed sincere till I ask or accept a favour: that is, in plain terms, I dearly love my hobby-horse, having no pressing interest to dismount me. However it must be acknowledged the beast is useful.

You, my dear admiral, value yourself justly for a strong logical understanding. Now only recollect,

when you order ships of 4,300 tons capacity without poops, do not let ships of 600 tons less capacity keep them longer than expedient, nor be built with them; and send the first-rate as soon as possible. Now I am revenged, and remain, &c.

Sunday, Newman Street, 73.

My dear Sir,—That we should be obliged to copy the admirable art of the construction of our ships of war from others, is more imputable to bad arrangement than want of science in the country; but the fact is not the less discreditable. The reasons you are thoroughly acquainted with; and unless mechanical knowledge is by some means infused to our navy board, the disgrace seems likely to be eternal.

The ignorance of the surveyors is not to be charged to their account; for mechanical science, to any extent, is not to be attained by observation during the life of any man without preparatory education; still less intuitively. At all events, mechanical science does not reside at the navy board. The last board of admiralty was so sensible of this deficiency in the navy board that the inspector-general's office was established. General Bentham is a clever, knowing man. 'Amongst the blind, the one-eyed are kings.' His mechanical science goes no farther than what is common amongst ingenious artists, and I suspect, if he had authority, his vanity would induce him to do mischief from his imperfect knowledge of the subject. 'Tis more to prevent mischievous absurdity and root out evil than to much improve, that my hopes extend.

To establish a mechanical mathematician commissioner at the navy board, to assist and guide the surveyors and talk sense with the admiralty, would,

in my view of the subject, do more good to this important branch of public welfare than any other mode I have heard suggested. As one of the board, the worthy amongst them would be proud and thankful for such an acquisition, which would do away the stigma that, they cannot be ignorant, attaches to them. His constant communication with the surveyors and dockyards, and at the same time his communication with the learned in this first science, would introduce the subject to general investigation, to the great improvement of the navy, advantage to the commercial community, and credit to the country.

In the actual state you feel convinced of the deficiency, and honourably for yourselves refuse the exercise of authority till assured of your fact; still I fear mechanical evils of great import are suffered to remain; and as things are, should you remove them, future caprice or opposition might replace them.

If Lord St. Vincent would communicate with the Royal Society (after your precedent) I have little doubt the gentleman I have often mentioned to you (Dr. Young)¹ would be recommended as fit for this important station.

All impertinent cry of job would be silenced by such a procedure. If any man of sense, independent of the particular science in question, upon reading the mechanical reports of the navy board, does not admit the urgent want of such an assistant to it, I am contented to be considered as an impertinent blockhead henceforward. I will venture to add that their

¹ Thomas Young, foreign secretary of the Royal Society; a man of extraordinary attainments as a linguist, a mathematician, a physicist and mechanic, who—according to Helmholtz—had the misfortune to be so superior in his sagacity to his contemporaries, that they could not always follow the bold flights of his intellect.

incapacity once made manifest, your conduct will appear in its useful and honourable light, more strongly seen and more generally understood than through any other mode whatever.

Sunday morning.

My dear Admiral,—I trust and hope you will consider and reconsider the subject I touched upon this morning relative to the nomination of a mechanical committee from the members of the navy board, with Dr. Young for their secretary.

It would be a waste of words to expatiate with you on the want of an advantage to be derived from the infusion of such knowledge to the navy board, nor have I any doubt but that such an establishment would prove very grateful to a major part of us.

The committee need not attend, *en corps*, more than one day in the week, the secretary to devote his time and application to the intention and objects of the appointment.

When one reflects upon the enormous cost attached to the most trifling articles employed to equip our navy—3,000*l.* proposed to be saved by changing the materials used for waxing the sail-makers' thread for example—the salary of an additional secretary of a committee can have little weight in the ballast.

Upon my honour, I have no other knowledge of the man, nor interest in the business, than a certitude of his fitness for the place—I will venture to say unequalled—and the absolute necessity of the adoption of some such measure of economy and useful arrangement to be obtained through the exertion of the navy board. For God's sake use your every means to root out the empire of ignorance and the influence of quackery, which have hitherto so disgraced and very materially injured us; and as our

energies cannot be slackened let them be directed in their *detail* by science.

N. O., Monday.

My dear Admiral,—I will venture to affirm that the draft of a first-rate, furnished for your inspection, is [excellent], excepting the draft of water, which is probably of no great importance, as this ship will draw less water than the *Hibernia*, and by taking away a false keel a good deal less. You will have the best first-rate in the world.

The surveyors are really of one mind, and I will venture to predict the service will infinitely benefit by their joint endeavours. Sir William Rule sees the case as clearly as we do with respect to the quantity of capacity required, and is perfectly ready to renew the labour of a fresh plan if you think the draft of water too much. As I know you love conciliation of opinion, this account will give you pleasure.

The ship is admirable. I must conclude with, &c.

My dear Sir,—The man who wished his enemy to write a book must be presumed the wisest. Our affectionate friends expose their ignorance sufficiently if the enemy was not above making use of it. If cutting the limber streak does not weaken it, it must be so. It appears to me gross impertinence to say so.

They admit the winches at right angles be attended with advantage.

I stated that heavy bodies would inevitably if in the well be drawn up the cylinder, and they send for advice, which confirms the fact; for Mr. Collins says many chaldrons of coals were delivered, and the chain broke in the case of the *Guardian*. It is purposely to avoid this sort of mischief that I proposed the change.

Floating bodies may do mischief in either case.
 If the trumpet form compressed oval be necessary it is an idle expense, but in the case instanced in the Guardian it caused the mischief presumed. I cannot but seriously recommend you to order General Bentham to act, for by — they will not!

I will call on you to-morrow at half past three.
 Pray take care of the papers.

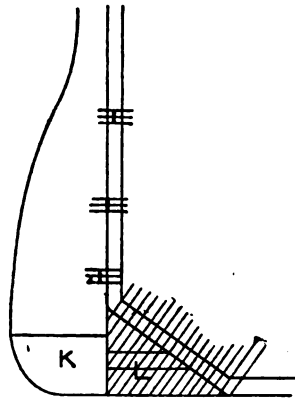
My dear Admiral,—You will be gratified to hear that Sir Charles Blagden is a most decided advocate for science and enemy to quackery, and that we are most righteously determined to grant no remuneration that we can help; that is, we must let the party as it ought to do, die. Let us hope it will prove a memento, and give, not a sous. My Lord Howe said a word of his own accord on the quackery of the plans, much to my taste. I can only pray God to bless and preserve you for the good of the service. I will give it to you under my hand, and so help me God. I know no man so hearty in the cause of improvement and, taking all in all, so capable of decision in its behalf.

My assistance, as far as my means go, is zealous co-operation with you.

My dear Sir,—As everything connected with the navy board is of importance, I think it right to put you in possession of a curious fact you will or should perceive at Deptford.

The new ship in frame has her tail cut off. I suspect by friend Peake. The fact is, he has prepared a rudder which on striking the ground is to lose the lower part about four feet up, and is content with this, the after part of the ship is

be knocked off into the bargain. I suspect this pleasantry is between Admiral Gambier and him. *k* the part of the rudder to be knocked off; *l* the part of the body to be knocked off. The worst of this contrivance is that the ship will not steer if the lower part of the rudder is removed, and if the ship tails the ground, ten to one this part will twist and destroy her steerage.



You will see the propriety of being prepared for this phenomenon, to play your surprise with effect.

Peake is a good and sensible man, but with all the wildness of a young projector.

You will not forget the depth in hold of the Charlotte, and as in conversation 'tis probable Peake will propose straightening the sheer of the deck to raise the midship port, the comptroller will object, and confound the raising of the midship port with lowering the foremost and aftermost ports, which he did to me, and I did not set him right.

You will easily perceive that by straightening the sheer of the deck, the fore and after ports are not touched but the middle lifted, and, what is stronger

than argument, the Caledonia is so served by S W. Rule.

You will naturally ask if it is right to correct one instance and neglect in another. These puzzlers have good effect: that surely there is necessary depth of hold requisite for stability and ensure a height of ports; that if the surveyors understand the question, it is plain they have neglected to put it in practice; that the number of three deckers cut down are a melancholy proof of ignorance or neglect, and that it is really very hard the will neither do right themselves nor suffer others that the French proceed with science to system and that if we cannot get our builders [to] understand them, it is the duty of the admiralty to copy them, except when the alterations of size proportioned to our inferior artillery renders the propriety of a deviation obvious; that the variety in the classe is a proof of our ignorance and the caprice which ever attends it, and is an evil that demands a speedy remedy, &c., &c.

French Dimensions, Ord. 1786, in English measure.

1st Rate	2nd Rate	80	74	64
209 L.	198 L.	195 L.	181 L.	166 L.
53.6 B.M.	52.6 B.M.	51 B.M.	48 B.M.	44 B.M.
25.0 Dep.	24.6 D.	23.9 D.	22 D.	20 D.

English Dimensions.

1st Rate	2nd Rate	80	74	64
186 } 190 } L. *205 }	177 } 182 } L. *196 }	180 } L. 180 }	168 } L. 182 }	160 L.
52.4 } 53.0 } B.M. 22.4 } *23.4 }	50 } *51 } B.M. 21.6 D. *22 }	50.3 } 51.3 } B.M. 22.4 } 23.0 }	46.6 } 49.0 } B.M. 19. } 21.10 }	44.6 B.M. 19 D.

* Dimensions of the Caledonia building, do. Ocean and Impregnable.

FROM CAPT. THOMAS HAMILTON 349

Proposed Dimensions.

1st Rate	2nd Rate	80	74	64
204 L.	194 L.	190 L.	180 L.	166
53 B.M.	52 B.M.	50 B.M.	48 B.M.	44
23.6 D.	23 D.	22.6 D.	21.6 D.	20
16 ports	15 ports	15 ports	14 ports	13 ports
guns :	no poop	32 24	32 24	24 18
32 24 18	32 24 guns			
	32 caruds.			
	elsewhere			

FROM SIR SAMUEL HOOD

Trinidad, 27 April, 1803.

My dear Sir,—On the loss of Lieutenant Gossel I have placed Mr. Scriven in his vacancy and Mr. Mowat in Mr. Scriven's; it is the vacancy of Mr. coming out without a pennant lieutenant.

I was glad I had an opportunity of giving Mr. Mowat a chance, as his father was a very old acquaintance of mine; he brought me your letter about three weeks ago, and has been since in one of the *Ulysses* tenders. I am now just getting under sail for Barbadoes. Troubridge will tell you all the news and my public letter. With all good wishes believe me,

Very truly yours,
SAML. HOOD.

Centaur, off Martinique, 6th June, 1803.

My dear Sir,—Be assured I will do everything in my power to serve Mr. Williamson the moment he has served the regular time. I believe you mistake Clewlow for Tracey being my secretary and wishing for a ship in ordinary. You will find I have appointed Clewlow to the *Emerald* as he wished it, in the room of Mr. Archdeacon (deceased), and the purchase of the *Cyane* to *Ulysses*. Clewlow is desirous of active service, but I dare say I may be able soon to arrange something for Mr. Williamson, which I certainly will do.

Woodman shall come home the moment he has served his time ; he was kept in the *Advice* in case [she was] detached on the surveying by herself, as we had not a lieutenant to put in fully equal to it ; Mr. Smith being in the *Express*, and one with me, and the first of course on board the *Ulysses*. The last young men made into her are not equal to it, so I kept Woodman to be ready, and he would have had exercise enough if the surveyor-general would have gone in her—instead of hiring a vessel at 4,000*l.* a year—as I offered him, and it would have answered both purposes ; and my being here myself prevented my going in her as intended, and was obliged to keep her off Port of Spain in the dry season.

It now looks a little warlike ; I begin to think Mr. Addington a good minister. Remember me to Troubridge, to whom I have nothing to say, only good wishes, and believe me, &c.

Centaur, off Demerara, 25 September, 1803.

My dear Sir,—You will perceive acting appointments have been numerous in the squadron from the vessels purchased for the service, and it is fortunate for Woodman he did not go home to pass. I have ordered him to join that he may be examined, and intend putting him in the *Ulysses* in the room of Lieutenant Smith, who is removed to the *Centaur*, and to be tried by a court-martial for killing a civilian at Trinidad, who obstructed him on the impress service. The Spanish laws not taking cognisance of an officer, Brigadier-General Hislip has requested a court-martial, which I shall order ; he is the officer Sir Erasmus Gower recommended to both of us, and I trust will sufficiently exculpate himself.

If you confirm what I have already appointed, I

shall be able to attend hereafter to any the admiralty may be desirous of putting forward. Should not the public conduct of officers require the aid of the commander-in-chief? Captain Maxwell, Nourse and Woollcombe are those I have been particularly interested about, and shall hope, if I am not thought too anxious, they will meet the approbation of Lord St. Vincent. The latter is a son-in-law of Louis's sister and a relative of Lord Hood; the two former were my lieutenants some years, and excellent officers. With all my good wishes believe me, &c.

Plymouth Dock, 3 February, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I cannot sufficiently express my acknowledgments for the very handsome manner in which Mr. Grey offers me a seat at the admiralty should the king accede to the proposed administration. In the first place I do not feel myself equal to the task of so close attendance, and my greatest ambition has always been for active service at sea, where my profession has constantly led me to incline. I do assure you nothing would sooner make me swerve from this plan than being a coadjutor with you. Pray do, therefore, make my apology to Mr. Grey, and say how very sensible I feel for his good opinion of me, and how happy I shall be to promote his views as far as active service at sea can lead me, and believe me, &c.

My letters did not reach me until the moment before the posts going out, so that I write in haste.

Plymouth Dock, 4 February, 1806.

My dear Lord,—Finding the *Centaur* required more repair than Lord Barham expected, she was on my saying so to Lord Garlies ordered to be docked,

and this delayed my pressing to join her, that I did not reach this until Friday. Your lordship may be assured of my particular care of poor Wilmot's nephew Mr. Henderson, or any others your lordship may be desirous of placing under my charge. The Centaur goes into dock to-morrow, but has been so very much shook abaft that she will at least require two springs in dock to set her to rights. Having been so long on shore I shall rejoice when I get to sea again, for although I am become a Benedict, I cannot hold in my mind any idea of giving up active service whilst there is anything to do. We had a severe gale at SE yesterday, and in Cawsand Bay the Kent and Pompée, Admiral Thornbrough's and the Knight of the Sword's¹ ships, both struck; the former so much suffered she must be docked, and the other is detained until directions come from the admiralty, as she was under the former's orders—and the chevalier is in expectation of other orders, I imagine, from the changes likely to take place, in which we are told your lordship will have an active part. I most sincerely hope so, as I well know how much the country will be benefited thereby; and to me, who has felt so much of your lordship's kindness, it will be the more grateful.

Lady Hood,² who accompanied me hither on finding the Centaur was to be docked, desires to be joined in her kindest respects. I am, my dear lord, your very faithful and truly obliged, humble servant,
SAM. HOOD.

To Earl St. Vincent.

¹ Sir Sidney Smith.

² The Hon. Mary Mackenzie, daughter of Lord Seaforth. They were married in 1804.

Plymouth Dock, February 6, 1806.

My dear Admiral,—My letter to you of Monday will have told you how I felt myself on the very handsome offer of Mr. Grey to give me a seat at the admiralty. I do again assure you the very gratifying manner in which he has himself made it would have inclined me to alter my resolution for active service at sea could anything, and the colleagues mentioned would have been a further inducement, but the bent of my mind is so different it will not allow me to think of it further. Believe me, with all good and sincerest wishes towards you, &c.

Lady Hood, who is with me, desires her kind remembrances, and I must beg the same to Mrs. Markham.

Plymouth Dock, 10th March, 1806.

My dear Sir,—The enclosed contains a few hints on the subject I mentioned to you just before I left town, respecting the employment of a number of cutters and luggers to gain intelligence and early information of the movements of the enemy's squadrons.

There are here two luggers and two cutters, seizures, brought from the western ports, I imagine for the purpose of despatch boats, and there are some more of the same description at St. Ives ready to be sent for, but I fear if they are manned as our cutters generally are, and not hired, they would defeat the object intended. There would be no difficulty in finding persons to contract to man and sail them under the same stipulations as other hired armed vessels: plenty of men may be found in Cornwall who will not otherwise come forward, and many more vessels of the same description may be hired; from my enquiries it appears advertising would be the best and

cheapest way. I have consulted Mr. Jackson on it and he is of the same opinion with me, as is Mr. Tucker, the builder. A lugger similar to the two before mentioned, and brought also from one of the western ports, was about two or three months ago fitted for a despatch boat and commissioned, but in such a manner—her gunwales like a frigate's quarter-deck, full of cabins and bulkheads below—which must have defeated the object she was intended for. Just as she was nearly ready she was run on board of, and carried away two of her masts, and she has been laying ever since, without being touched; I believe her lieutenant is in the hospital, and in the first place, I am told, not at all calculated to command her. She might be easily fitted up properly by knocking down all that has been done to her at some expense.

At first I had an idea that it would have been necessary to put a commander in each vessel, but this might be thought too trifling a command for that rank, and two lieutenants. However, great care should be taken in the selection of lieutenants to command them, as well as the other officers; and that it is not made a job of by any one, which we have always so much to fear about.

The Centaur on further opening has been found very defective; they are working hard at her, but it will require near two months to put her out of dock. I am summoned to attend a trial at Maidstone the 17th, and in my way will call on you at the admiralty, Saturday.

The Enclosed.

It is evident in war one of the principal objects is good intelligence; lately the enemy's squadrons have run about, without our having any knowledge of their time of sailing or route, and it has been only by

chance they have been fallen in with. It is impossible to disperse the larger ships to cover the ground necessary ; blockading squadrons cannot keep their stations always in bad weather, and the enemy by signals along the coast can point out their situation, and by this direct the course of their own ships that sail in the night to avoid them, though they may pass not far distant. Twenty or thirty cutters and luggers, fast sailers, would greatly remedy the evil, and the expense would be much overbalanced by their utility. Some of these might be stationed on the enemy's coast and would not be so easily observed as larger vessels by their look out ; and sometimes, detaching their boats in-shore, they might obtain intelligence, should they suspect any of the enemy's ships to have sailed ; others stationed thirty or forty leagues distant (a good night's run) from the ports of Brest, Lorient, Rochfort, &c., then a chance would be in discovering the enemy the day after leaving port. Vessels of the description wanted to answer the purpose proposed should be hired ; first, because the men to man them should be got from the smuggling trade, and such men have a great reluctance to the naval punishments ; and, in the second, it would be right they should be better paid than in the usual service of the navy, for not one of these should be allowed to share prize money—an object to obtain that frequently leads both officers and men from the real object such vessels would be employed for—and it would prevent any jealousy from their superior pay by being hired. By taking this class of men it should also assist the revenue. Vessels from 70 to 120 tons well calculated for this service are easily hired, particularly to the westward. Great care should be taken that they are fitted with low gunwales to row as many oars as men in case of calms ; to carry one carronade only, 18 or 24 pounder, 16 muskets,

16 cutlasses, 8 pair pistols and 16 half pikes ; and two brass swivels might be fitted to ship forward or aft. Great care must also be taken to have as few bulkheads as possible ; and their decks, being generally thin, a good coat of tar, ochre and smithery cinders would keep them from leaking. A lieutenant appointed to command each, one sub-lieutenant, and one good mate or midshipman, to be found by the navy ; also an assistant surgeon. As these vessels would be of much importance great care should be had in the selection of the officers. The master and from 16 to 20 men should be found by the owners ; they should all be well paid ; the men not to have less, paid by the owners, than 2*l.* 10*s.* per month. They should all be put under the orders of the commander-in-chief of the Channel fleet, a frigate appointed to superintend them particularly, and under the captain of which they should be immediately placed. It would be impossible to get many of those vessels coppered, nor would it be necessary, as in one tide they could run on shore on their legs, and clean and tallow as often as was requisite. The service of such vessels for early communication of intelligence would be incalculable, and would draw a set of men into great use to the country that would otherwise be employed injuring its revenue.

SAM. HOOD.

9th March, 1806.

If such vessels are also provided with a set of good glasses independent of those found by the officers, to be used only on particular occasions, it would be of great service.

Plymouth Dock, 26th March, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I have just had with me Mr. J. Bunce, carpenter of the *Victory* when Nelson

fell; he was my carpenter in l'Aigle, with Troubridge in the Culloden, and recommended by both to Lord Nelson, and was put some time in the yard at Gibraltar. Hardy was in the hope of getting him the Nelson laid down at Chatham, but was too late in his application; he has now been told the Trafalgar is to be laid down in this yard, and if he can get her, it will be doing him some service. He was ever much respected in his line, and would do great justice as a master shipwright in a foreign yard. The Centaur is getting on fast; another month of this weather will nearly set her afloat. I congratulate you on the success of Sir J. Duckworth. This will make Mr. Bony look about him; how he risks his squadrons! We may justly thank the Rochfort squadron for this success: I hope you will soon hear of the others, under Mr. Jerome. I don't think they will do much mischief. Pray, how does the chief like Falmouth? The southerly wind for this last week keeping in a part of his fleet will, I think, make him rather doubtful. My respects to Mrs. M., and believe me, &c.

P.S.—The port admiral appears a little tired.

Plymouth Dock, 15 April, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I should have thanked you sooner for your letter about Mr. Bunce, but I had nothing new to give you from home or more to answer about the chief of the port, than he had said he was tired, and indicated it several times to me. I imagine the cause was he does not command the admiralty as he most certainly did the former one. I wrote to Lord Howick yesterday asking the appointment of a Mr. Joynes to the chaplaincy of the Centaur. The present chaplain

is a brother-in-law of Sir Rupert George's, and got appointed to the ship at Halifax merely for the passage home and for as long as he could keep her without going to sea. I immediately sought after another from Cambridge, that would give instruction to the youngsters. Mr. J. is thoroughly recommended from the college, understands mathematics, and carried the prize last year of the Wranglers—of course a clever man.¹ I think you will agree with me those sort of persons should be encouraged to come into the service. Probably his lordship may ask you about it prior to its being brought before the board. I find by a letter from Sir Arthur White's late secretary he is laid alongside the former Lady W. at Bermudas; his death was to be expected—he has lived hard, and a young wife. The Centaur gets on fast; I hope the end of the month will get her out of dock, and then a very short time to sea. We have had it very cold here, but good weather for the shipwrights. With my best respects to Mrs. Markham, believe me, &c.

Centaur, Porto Praya, 19th July, 1806.

My dear Sir,—After all that has happened I imagine you will think me not a little disappointed. However I shall return off the Canaries and do the best I can. You will find by my letter to Mr. Marsden what I have done with Evans, and I have given him many hints about getting information—particularly to call at Graciosa. We want nothing yet, and I think if Captain and Ganges had stayed for me I could have managed to have kept them up until I heard from the admiralty. Madeira

¹ He was 12th Wrangler in 1804, and a fellow of St. Catherine's Hall; a worthy forerunner of the naval instructors, first appointed thirty years later.

produces nothing but wine and water ; beef very dear. I hope we may be able to get the latter from Africa in abundance, with fruit and vegetables. I have sent my weekly account to show how we stand, and should have been better had your agent victualler at Portsmouth been under Lord St. Vincent's management a little while. This is a miserable place, particularly after so many soldiers, but I want nothing and shall be off immediately. I think the merchants ought now to be satisfied of Popham's speculations, as they have had their share in paying for it. I shall take the liberty of giving you a line when I can tell you anything I think can be useful. With my respects to Mrs. Markham, believe me always, &c.

Centaur, Madeira, 11 December, 1806.

My dear Sir,—You will perceive the Captain, Ganges and Defence have joined me. I despair almost of getting the Theseus, though I have taken every means to do so ; it is hardly possible Murray will catch them before they get to their first stop. Shipley¹ was at Graciosa, where he found the soundings and anchorage exactly as given in the common West Indian Atlas, or African : ships of the line can lay, he thinks, without gunshot of Lanserotte, and in smooth water with the common eastern or northern wind, but west and south-west winds are open, but there is $4\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms in the narrowest part of the channel through. There is no water on Graciosa, and a bad well on Lanserotte, as marked in the charts. He found a great number of goats on the first island, but no inhabitants ; the

¹ Captain Conway Shipley, son of Dr. Shipley, Dean of St. Asaph, was born in 1782. He was killed in 1808, when in command of the *Nymphe*, in an attempt to cut out a French brig at anchor in the Tagus.

Spaniards come over from Lanserotte to get salt (in small quantities), and they told Shipley the goats did not belong to any person. He got about 100; the Spaniards shoot and catch them as they choose. He carried American colours, but he thought the Spaniards appeared very shy the last day and did not go near them. That part of Lanserotte is high and barren, except where the village and watering place is low; as the wind was easterly there was a great surf near the wall, that his boat could not lay there. Nothing like a gun on any of that part of the island; if a ship should get disabled, it is a famous place to put her in order. Part of Graciosa lies high, and there is every appearance of there having been formerly a volcano; at any rate we can get refreshment of goats for the sick, and you will perceive what I have said in my public letter about refreshments from Mogador. I have two or three schemes for refreshing the squadron, and hope some will succeed better than Madeira, where everything is exorbitantly dear, and little to be got except pumpkins when in season.

The consul here is a heavy-headed genius, as you will perceive by my public letter. Why he did not give the Landrail my rendezvous he cannot tell but that he forgot it; but how he could forget to give Quail one to find me I am at a loss, as he to know, but it cannot happen again. He sent the Quail to look for me in the vague situation of the latitude of the Canaries, though he had three of my sealed rendezvous. Many thanks for your kind attention to Lady Hood, and with every kind regard to Mrs. Markham, believe me, &c.

I don't know how this will go, but I believe I shall give it Winthrop for a chance of falling in with a ship.

P.S.—I have sent the Centaur's demands for what she now wants and to replace such as are much worn, but we may make shift till May if there is not a favourable opportunity of sending them. The quantity of twice-laid¹ rope and the lower lifts and braces not worn sufficiently to be condemned when the ship was at Spithead, makes the demand of rope the more.

¹ Twice-laid was cordage made from the inner strands of old rope.

FROM SIR ALEXANDER COCHRANE

Edinburgh, 16 August, 1802.

Dear Sir,—As I am now settled in Scotland, should you find occasion to send any ships down from Portsmouth with discharged men, or to be on the Scotch station, I will thank you to request of their commanders to bring down as many of my things and wines (left with Mr. Turner) as they can conveniently stow. There are no merchant vessels that pass between Portsmouth and Leith, which prevents me getting them by any other way than a king's ship, unless by the circuitous way of London, by which means the wines would be ruined and half the other articles destroyed.

My election has ended in a double return, by which I shall have a contest before a committee, but have not the least doubt of being secure in my seat. I hope that you got easily over your election. Troubridge walked over the course. Make my best compliments to him, and believe me to be, dear sir,

Yours most sincerely,

A. COCHRANE.

Edinburgh, 1st June, 1803.

Dear Markham,—Lieutenant George Steel, who has been very attentive to my interest during the late election, and in whose favour much interest was used at the time of the last promotion, has lately wrote to

be employed. As he is the person I could wish to go with me, should I get a ship—as 1st lieutenant—I will thank you not to send him out of the way until I see you in London, which will be within a fortnight.¹

I have found all my family in perfect health, and as soon as I have settled my private affairs, which won't take up but a few days, Mrs. Cochrane and I set off for London.

With best compliments to Troubridge, I ever am, my dear sir, &c.

I have received a letter from Hellard, who was with me in the *Ajax*, which letter I enclose. If you can have him you will find him deserving of the appointment he solicits. He was long Curzon's lieutenant, and when his frigate was lost at Plymouth, suffered severely from the mainmast falling on him, by which he has lost the power of one arm.

Plymouth Dock, 19 July.

Dear Markham,—I have this day wrote your board to appoint a guardian to our souls, which I suppose will not be objected to; the person is the Rev. Richard Thomas, one of the clergymen of Bristol, who is also to take charge of my youngsters.

You well know that there is not the sign of a soldier at quarters, and that unless you distribute the recruits into the fleet as they come to quarters, all the old soldiers will be in some ships and the others (if supplied at all) have none but those of the former descriptions. I hope therefore that you will see the propriety of every ship having a proportion of old soldiers, discharged from the ships off Brest, &c.,

¹ Lieut. Steel was drowned when the *Seaforth* was capsized in the West Indies in February 1806.

taking them as they run on the list, else they will send only those that are of little use.

I will soon be ready for sea, when I hope the admiralty will order me to be manned. I expect a good many men round in tenders; at present I muster about a hundred. We leave the wharf this day, and I hope in eight days that I will be ready for sea—except painting, which I care not one farthing for. I hope the admiralty will enable me to try the trim of the *Northumberland* by giving me a little range, which will bring up the lee way occasioned by my late contest—not less than 8,000*l*. Money ill-spent you will say; so do I now; but so it is, and I must grin and bear it.

I will by to-morrow's post send you a petition to parliament, drawn up with great temper and moderation, which I hope will obtain powers to the naval commissioners to enquire into the manner in which prize causes have been conducted.

We have most searching weather, as bad as in English harbour. Pray what brings *Aylmer* in from the fleet? Ever, my dear sir, &c.

Plymouth Dock, 20 July, 1803.

Dear Markham,—I enclose you a copy of the memorial which has been signed by the admirals and captains here, and will be forwarded to Harvey to be presented. I propound them, as I suspect that neither you nor Troubridge would wish to appear in it. I believe that you will have similar memorials sent from the fleet, Portsmouth, and the North Sea, as Sir John Colpoys means to send copies there. I hope when you have any men to dispose of at this port you will not forget the *Northumberland*, should any marines be disposable; their being sent to me will forward us very much. Except men,

the ship shall be ready to put to sea in eight days.
I ever am, my dear sir, &c.

*To the Honourable the Commons of the United
Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.*

The petition of the admirals and
captains of his Majesty's fleet

Most humbly sheweth,—

That your petitioners have observed with much pleasure the powers with which the commissioners for naval enquiry are vested to examine into the conduct of the agents appointed for captures made by the navy during the last war.

And your petitioners, relying on the conduct and support which they have ever experienced from your honourable house, presume to request that you will be pleased to extend the powers of the said commissioners for naval enquiry, by directing them to investigate the manner in which prize causes have hitherto been conducted both at home and abroad, in order that they may be enabled to recommend such alterations as may appear to them advisable to be adopted for the interest of the British navy. For which purpose they further request that the said commissioners may be authorised to call for the production of all papers and documents appertaining thereunto.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

Plymouth Dock, July 26.

Dear Markham,—I will thank you very much if you will put the earl in mind of Lord Cochrane,¹ who from his former conduct will do full as much

¹ Sir Alexander's nephew.

honour to any appointment his lordship may give him as many of those who have been lately sent afloat. Many applications have been made in his favour, and promises given, yet he remains on half-pay.

I wish to mention to you that the corded wood sold in the yard will answer far better for the purpose than any other wood ; but they are prevented from buying, as ready money is required. Now, would it not answer fully as well for government to set this wood off against their necessary wood, and all the difference would be that government would retain, instead of receiving, the money arising from the wood ?

I am glad that you have taken some steps relative to the marines. Why do you not try and get all those who formerly were marines out of the militia ? The officers will not discharge them as seamen, consequently we lose a number of good men. I hope you mean also to follow up what I started in the house relative to their being recruited from the army of reserve ; in short, I see that we will be ill-off if some plan is not fallen upon. Had I men I could be a sea in five days. Everything for four ms will be under the hatches ; before you receive this we shall have only our guns and stores to take on board. I hope for some aid from the admiralty in the manning way, and should a party of marines cast up that are to be turned over, do remember the Northumberland.

I sent Eliab Harvey the petition by yesterday's post.

Plymouth Dock, 1st August.

My dear Markham,—Old Dilkes has taken a crotchet in his head that no men who come in tenders are to be considered as volunteers : the old

boy thinks to make up his lee way by being double diligent upon his arrival. I have wrote the board complaining of this, and I hope you will have orders sent to allow me my men ; indeed I will (except the *Foudroyant*) be the only 2-deck ship left, so that you will suffer nothing by the sacrifice. Bedford is now in Cawsand Bay, and although no one is less apt to envy the good fortune of another than I am, yet, considering that there are no old marines at quarters, I think there would be no great crime in coveting one third part of his old soldiers, and unless you fall upon some plan like this, I see no chance of the Northumberland getting a party at all. The recruits sent to him will soon be broke in by the party on board, and the men sent me will train the Johnnie new comers. Not a scraper or a broom in store. I cannot get one from the yard to scrape the decks before the guns come on board.

The master rigger does not keep one half the hands he ought. Instead of his setting the rigging up, the ships' crews must do it, else it would not be done at all, or in a way not sufficient for the ship to go to sea.

In short, we are full of complaints, and this last act of keeping my men has vexed my soul not a little, as I was in hopes of getting to sea almost as soon as those who appear more forward.

Northumberland, Barbadoes, 10 April, 1807.

My dear Admiral,—By a mistake in names a Mr. Tilly was appointed in the room of your friend Allen to the *Demerara* and *Pultusk*.¹ I have, however, this day appointed him to the *Prince George*, which will do full as well as to confirmations, they being both admiralty vacancies.

¹ Prizes taken in the West Indies.

FROM SIR ALEXANDER COCHRANE 369

I wish you would send me some surgeon's assistants. Few of our vessels commanded by lieutenants have any person to perform an operation should they get into action. We are in great want of marines; about 150 would set me up.

I beg my best compliments to Mrs. Markham, and remain, &c.

Mr. Tilly's patron is Sydney Yorke, so I see by my list.

Plymouth Dock, 26th August, 1807.

Dear Markham,—I have been writing Troubridge about my ship being left out of the admiralty list of ships to be first fitted for sea. I hope it has been an oversight, as the best of men may sometimes make a mistake. Do correct it as soon as possible, and let me get into deep water.

I was sorry to see the little attention which was paid to our petition. If I am spared till next winter and can get to town for ten days, Sir W. Scott shall have another battle to fight. I will then take care to be better supported than I was last encounter. As the petitions are on the table they can be moved for at any time. Do, my good friend, send Lord Cochrane afloat. I do not care what ship is given him so she is not a block, as I trust if ever he has an opportunity he will not be behindhand with his brother officers. Give me but marines and seamen and you will have the constant prayers of, &c.

FROM SIR THOMAS TROUBRIDGE

Penang, August 23rd, 1806.

My dear Markham,—The public letter will show you how fortunate my cruises have been. It was a bold dash, and I have great pleasure in saying Elphinstone says Tom in the Harrier behaved like a brave, good fellow; had he done otherwise I would with great composure put a pistol ball through his nob. Now, my good friend, I have made him post into the Dutch frigate Pallas—by name now the Macassar. May I request your influence with the first lord to confirm him, and you will add an everlasting favour to many others before bestowed? I know you will make allowances for my pressing request, and attribute it to the anxiety of a parent to see his son as high in the service as it will admit. With best regards to Mrs. Markham, and shake of the fist to Rice and Jack,¹

Believe me,

Yours most truly,

T. TROUBRIDGE.²

¹ Admiral Markham's sons.

² This letter from Sir Thomas Troubridge to Admiral Markham is explained by another to Lord Howick, the first lord, dated August 20, 1806. He reports that the Dutch frigate Pallas had been captured by H.M.S. Greyhound and Harrier sloop on July 25. Sir Thomas commissioned her, with the name of Macassar, as there was already a Pallas in the navy. He appointed his son to command her, and asked that the appointment might be confirmed.

FROM SIR EDWARD PELLEW

September 2, 1801.

Dear Markham,—Yours of the 9th ultimo reached me only to-day, and I should not trouble you to send a reply, if it was not to put you right respecting the removal of two lieutenants at once by my application; now the reverse was the fact, for it was their application to be removed, not mine. I briefly stated that they had both told me they were tired of the ship and me, and wished to be removed. I said exactly so much on it, only requesting that if both could not be removed, neither might, as the second was by no means fit to be first; and if both leave, that the third who had been five years with the ship's company might remain senior. So far was the fact, and the board were the best judges whether under such circumstances they would remove them or not. I made no complaint against their characters whatever; they were tired of me for making them do their duty, and wanted to be off. I believe we have all seen first lieutenants highly unfit for such situations, and as it now stands I hope you will be able so to continue it, leaving Pilfold senior. We are all here led to hope for peace; our enemies stand here as before, except working unceasingly throwing up forts on the islands of Ré and Oléron. I hope you will keep the rascals from landing at home. I have no great opinion of our land defences. Orion is relieved by Terrible.

Believe me, dear Markham,

Very truly and sincerely yours,

ED. PELLEW.

B B 2

P.S.—I have just heard a Lieutenant Oliver, of the marines, who was here, has sent to the earl certificates of mine for good conduct. If so they are forgeries; he is a very infamous character. I hear he wants to be made a lieutenant in the navy.

[Postmark, March 25, 1804.]

My dear Markham,—Ever since I arrived it has blown a gale, and no communication could we have with the ships until this day. I reached Ashburton on Tuesday night, and could get no further for want of horses. I have seen Tucker, and we have conversed on the forcing pumps, which cannot I find be fitted to us without docking, and that is entirely out of the question. The sails go off to-morrow and we pay at the same time, so that we shall be all ready Sunday for your orders, which I conclude will arrive before that time. The trawl materials I believe will not be forthcoming this time, I fear they have them not, nor is there a hammock in store, although they tell me they have written repeatedly to the navy board. I hope the fleet have not been blown entirely off from Ushant this hard gale. Venerable got out to-day, and Defiance is off. Present me to Sir Thomas, and believe me ever most sincerely and truly, &c.

April 2nd, 1804.

My dear Markham,—You have been making some very useful changes among the gunners' stores for the fleet, and among them none more essential than the new priming wires; and probably the bits¹ would be equally so were they made of good materials, but that, alas! (unless they are fabricated by yourselves) cannot happen. I send you one for example, which was used only once. I had it broke

¹ Vent bit.

off to send you. Don't you think they would answer better if made like common gimlets? I have sent you a French one I have used many years, like a centre-bit if it were made stronger; I think half a dozen for a ship of the line would be sufficient. At all events the new ones now served should be of better temper. I should almost suspect Sir Andrew had made a contract for them with the rope machine maker. I have forwarded my old one through the commissioner in a small box. The greatest defect of it is in drawing it out of the vent, the screw does not hold it sufficiently fast.

I write you this on my way to Ferrol, concluding something will be done on my return. I was sadly grieved on joining the chief to hear of poor Magnificent; it is a sad loss just now, but on the whole you are lucky to have lost no more, considering the severe winter.

Oh that I could send you some good news from hence! Present me to Sir Thomas and Sir Henry, and believe me with truth and sincerely, &c.

Plymouth, May 15, 1804.

My dear Markham,—That you have got off the list of captains I rejoice at and congratulate you. I write in ignorance of state affairs, but Jervis wishes to have his carpenter and boatswain (of late Magnificent), and I wish those of Tonnant, letting the gunner alone. I will say no more, for I know nothing, save only that I am sure you will do me all the kindness you can, for which God bless you! I shall if allowed see you directly; adieu!

I cannot save post to say more than that I am full of thankfulness for all your kindnesses, and hope to find you still in your house.

As you won't hear from the chief before to-morrow

I enclose state of enemies' force, which you may wish to see. I went on board Nile half past eight last night, but he would see none of us—and said 'Get along!'

Madras, August 15, [1806].

My dear Markham,—I have some doubts in the present state of continents if this will reach you. If it does it breathes you my sincere congratulations on your return to office, as thereby Mrs. M. will secure you from wandering over the ocean. You will find in office the appointment of young Elton which has no doubt met your attention—he is as fine a young man as is on the station. I have now had an opportunity of putting Lieutenant Henry Hart, whom Sir John Gore left with me, into a vacancy occasioned by the invaliding of Lord George Stuart, who has been long ill. Hart's friends I know are your supporters at Portsmouth, and with that view I embraced the means offered: you know he was with me until you made him a lieutenant and he is extremely deserving. We have by good fortune hemmed la Bellone between the Powerful, Rattlesnake, and the land, so that she had but one loophole which she fought manfully to pass, and nearly obliged Plampin to compliment him with his lower deckers. She is the most beautiful of little ships, a reduced Pomona, and sails superbly, just new coppered at Mauritius, which cost 4,000*l.*; had I not purchased her she would have been down there again from [*torn*] Tranquebar in six weeks. I promoted Mr. Bastard from the Rattlesnake to her as a 28; and made my son, who is uncommonly well informed and capable, into Rattlesnake. Since that poor old Bogue died, captain of the Terpsichore, and I have filled his vacancy by my son. This is the only DD vacancy I have had in my unhappy

command, and it is the only reward I look to for all my anxieties to get him confirmed. I know your situation too well to encumber you more than ask your support whenever it may come before you [*torn*]. I shall esteem your kindness . . . [*torn*] with thankful remembrances . . . [*torn*]. We have been here somewhat alarmed, and have landed all our marines in garrison. I would not go through my last year again to be governor-general of India. Adieu!

I hope Osborne and China ships have escaped Willaumez. Our ships will leave this about October 10. Do me all the kindness for my son you can; I may live to return it to one of yours, for you see the wheel goes round and round.

Madras, October 16, [1806].

My dear Markham,—The packet going off this moment I have only to tell you how we are situated. The convoy is late from detentions at Bengal. I have been obliged, to lessen the risk of this road, to move ten sail on to Trincomalee and have the other five here completing; they are reported ready by the 20th. I think by the 22nd we shall move off. We have no arrivals from Europe, and I fear it is now too late to approach the coast, so that my situation is most embarrassing. However I shall do my best. The great point I have in view is to guard against Jerome's division, who may think of joining the Dutch, and making an effort on the China fleet. I shall proceed with four that way, and I hope be joined by Albion, strengthened by new iron knees intended for the new ship at Bombay; they feared to take her into dock, she is so broke and lumbered. Sceptre I hear ought to be relieved or they will never return again after another year, I fear.

I shall take the chance of Batavia and act accordingly. If the French squadron should be there, don't be alarmed for us, I will not deceive your expectations. I hear Troubridge says he shall return home with his 10,000, and not go to Cape. If so I have only to hope you will not believe me quite so bad as he will paint me. When we meet I will endeavour to throw a little white upon his black. I would have disappointed the hopes of the world in the expectation of our falling out, if he would ; and I often used that very argument. We are both warm enough, God knows ; but brothers could not agree as we were placed. I wish you all happiness and am ever, with esteem, &c.

*FROM VICE-ADMIRAL THE HON. H. E.
STANHOPE*

Greenwich, February 20, 1806.

Dear Sir,—The board will receive this morn my report upon some iniquitous proceedings carried on in the block ships which are now employed in the Lower Hope—unfortunately not under my orders—and I feel assured that the irregularity has not been simply confined to the traffic of Mr. Collis, purser of the Solebay; for I searched out an old man, named Christopher Hindes, who had been coxswain on board the Modeste, and he says that exclusive of smuggling out of the Indiamen in which he had been employed, that upon the arrival of the fleet from India in August, the captain of the Modeste (Mr. Brabazon) took men out of the India ships and secreted them for some days, when they were sent up the river in one of the vessels belonging to the Trinity House, and that the same practice prevailed in the other ships. As the anonymous letter upon which my report is furnished does not notice this, I have not mentioned it in my public letter, but I really think it ought to be stated to the admiralty. Be so good as to tell me whether it is proper for me to do so. I am, dear sir,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

H. E. STANHOPE.

March 13, 1806.

My dear Sir,—Unless a little retarded by the present unfavourable winds, the Clyde will be ready

to sail to the Nore on Saturday, but at all events on Monday, which occasions my reminding you that the captain has not joined, and my flag lieutenant fitted her out and is now completing her, but you might perhaps wish to put a captain into her. The Beaulieu will be paid off on Friday, or Saturday at furthest, and I have ordered her crew to proceed to the Nore in the Clyde, to be disposed of as you please to direct. The Howe will, I trust, be out of docks next spring, and shall be eagerly hastened. I intend to pay you my compliments on Saturday morn to receive any commands you may have for me, and to mention that the master's mate of the Corso has constructed a model of a gun-boat which is not altogether without merit, although being built by him has not the elegance to recommend it which a ship's carpenter would have given it; and the man would feel highly honoured by your permission to submit it to you whenever you approve. I have also seen an extremely curious plan for raising the Royal George, which, I think, would afford you pleasure. The inventor has great mechanical genius. I am, dear sir, &c.

April 17, 1806.

My dear Sir,—The Howe dropped down to Gravesend this day, followed by three lighters of stores. Her guns will follow immediately, and I hope to hasten her away before the Indiamen.

Not a word have I heard from Mr. Congreve. I submit whether he should be written to by the board; but I can tell you he is putting government to scandalous expense for what cannot, I think, answer. The masts and rigging never can be useful as at present. The plan he has is to rig the vessel as a ship, with three masts, to sail either way, for which she is provided with two rudders—one ahead

and another astern. I am unwilling, without he calls upon me, to venture any opinion, lest he should throw upon us the disgrace of this unaccountable plan.

April 25, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I have made the best report in my power upon Mr. Congreve's mortar boat, and, I trust, as devoid of prejudice as possible, which it certainly was abundantly necessary I should guard against, and if the whole expense nearly had not been incurred, to encourage its continuation, while it might perhaps appear to Mr. Congreve that the merit or demerit of his plan should not rest upon the opinion of any one man, whatever might be the confidence in his individual capacity. Indeed, upon receipt of the board's order, I forbade any more expense to be incurred upon her, so that you will have the goodness to indulge me with your commands if you wish her to be tried; and although we might make some little experiment with her in the river, it is neither an eligible or proper plan to ascertain her capacity, as she must necessarily be exposed to considerable sea at times, and perhaps to work off from a lee shore. I can, however, assure you, my dear sir, that I shall critically and faithfully show myself a just steward in whatever you entrust in any way to my auspices, being truly, &c.

July 8, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I hope you will excuse my troubling you to say that, exclusive of the office I mentioned to you as having been occupied by the master shipwright to examine accounts, only since Mr. Duke's announcement to the navy board, there is another, infinitely larger than mine, in which one person alone writes belonging to the

clerk of the check's office. The fact is, that the officers of the yard would drive me out if possible, and of course will not tell the commissioner what may be appropriated for him. The admiral is the common enemy. I have little hope but in your protection, and some consideration will surely be had to the office, for the expulsion of the admiral would be a very pleasing joke among these gentlemen. I am, my dear sir, &c.

July 10, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I conclude it is to you I owe the civility of a visit from Commissioner Cunningham and Sir William Rule, who I accompanied to inspect the offices at Woolwich, and the actual place I mentioned to you, now found out at last, although it had before escaped attention. I was desirous to show my opinion that the resident governor of the garrison should have the preference, and readily gave up my office as the better situation, to occupy this very apartment to which I alluded, instead of Rule's foolish expensive plan of building a staircase, which must have sacrificed two rooms to make it; but repeating my opinion, that you had interfered, I was enabled to prevent this idle, destructive plan. It was also that I might not abuse my friend's interference, that I showed the desire of preference to the commissioner.

My dear sir, I am much obliged to you, and ever, &c.

*FROM CAPTAIN JOHN SUTTON*¹

Ville de Paris, Torbay, Saturday, March 21st, 1801.

Dear Markham,—I intended writing you a line to-day, after the force of this gale had taken its effect. The wind with us has been from SW to West, northerly; water smooth, and no ship has parted, or any accident; therefore you will be thankful that we are here. I wish for myself that Sir James Saumarez had an anchor down here, instead of blowing his sails away, to say nothing of masts.

The loss of the *Invincible* makes one's heart ache.² I hope in God that Sir Hyde has had good shelter before this gale came on; the squalls have been violent at west last night and this morning.

I visited Paington Hospital yesterday, and made my report to Admiral Cornwallis. I think Mr. Ball wants to be looked after; but the institution at present would admit of amendment.

The guard at the hospital is no more than a corporal and six privates, perfectly insufficient for the service.

The wall in front of the hospital is not more than five feet, with a sloping fence not armed with nails or tenter-hooks as it should be. The ground, I am told, is to be lowered near the wall, but then it will not be more than six or seven feet. The upper ward has no security for the sashes to prevent the men escaping, which ought to be provided

¹ At this time, captain of the fleet; he became rear-admiral, April 23, 1804.

² Wrecked on Hammond's Knowl, off the coast of Norfolk, on March 16, 1801. The captain and 400 people perished.

with iron bars and a net-work, as the windows of the lower ward are ; but I understand it was intended to be done. The principal cause of great irregularity at the hospital is, in my opinion, from the surgeon—Mr. Ball—not residing at the hospital.

I found nobody to gainsay Mr. Ball's account, or any complaint from the men ; and the dispensary seemed to me to be well supplied. His assistant was ill, and did not make his appearance.

The provisions—mutton, broth, vegetables, and the porter—I saw and tasted, which were perfectly good and proper ; but I have no doubt but there is something like a job in the case ; his son, a boy, was his steward ; the nursers, &c., were present and provided. There are but few patients there, and only fifteen have been landed from the fleet. I hear of no scurvy at all.

Pray has Sir Harry Neale your ship ? Superb is just come in from Cawsand Bay ; the ships there are rather tardy.

Mrs. S. always sends her kindest remembrance. Pray make my best compliments to Mrs. Markham.

I am faithfully and affectionately yours,

J. S.

My dear Markham,—Business has I dare say prevented my hearing from you since my two last letters. I am sorry to inform you of the disagreeable accident that has happened to your old ship *Centaur*, the night before last, at half-past twelve o'clock, when a shift of wind nearly of six points at an instant took the squadron aback when in the order of sailing, and the *Mars* and the *Centaur*, who were following ships, the last but one of the weather division, met each other ; the *Mars* having come about, and not having got round upon the same tack the squadron were upon, and meeting the

Centaur in a heavy squall, has occasioned this misfortune to both ships; the Centaur lost her mainmast, the Mars her foremast and bowsprit. This is what I can collect from the letter of Admiral Thornbrough, but Centaur's account has not been received.

The Centaur I have no uneasiness about, but the Mars we parted from yesterday at noon, in the bight between Ushant and Abervrach, blowing strong at NNE; however, the Canada had the Mars then in tow; the Mars had her mainsail and close reefed mizen topsail set, and a topmast up for a jury foremast; and, besides the Canada, the Achille was by signal attending her into safety.

The gale is now diminishing in force, and I hope the wind may veer to the westward; at present it is at NNE still, with hail and sleet at times, which feed it. The frigates are close in; Ushant now bears from us east eight leagues.

I hope you are endeavouring at a peace, and with success.

Do tell me if I can get Mr. John Glassford, mate of the Ville de Paris, a commission.

V. de P., off Ushant, 12th April [1801].

Dear Markham,—Thank you for your letter of the 10th, since which what glorious news from the Baltic! I congratulate you and the country upon it from the bottom of my heart. I hope that scoundrel Bonaparte may soon follow him.

The admiral took me with him in the Fisgard yesterday to have a look at Brest. On the other side is my own report of the state of the enemy. You will understand it. Adieu in great haste.

Ville de Paris, Monday, 20th April.

Report.

Observations made on board the *Fisgard*, of the enemy's fleet in Brest Harbour, April 18th, 1801; Bertheaume Fort bearing N b W, at which time the ship was within two or three miles from the point of Camaret Bay.

Nearest to the northermost point of the harbour, and then ranging across the harbour, six frigates lay together; and at a little distance from them two other frigates; two or three had topgallant yards across and sails bent.

No.

1. } Spanish ships of the line, sails not bent,
2. } laying together.
3. }
4. A French three-deck ship, wearing a broad pennant, topgallant yards across, no sails bent.
5. A Spanish three-deck ship, a vice-admiral, no sails bent.
6. A French line-of-battle ship, sails bent, with a blue flag with a white cross at the fore topgallant masthead.
7. A French line-of-battle ship, sails bent.
8. A French three-deck ship, a rear-admiral.
9. A Spanish line-of-battle ship, no sails bent.
10. A Spanish three-deck ship, a rear-admiral.
11. A French line-of-battle ship, topgallant yards across.
12. A Spanish line-of-battle ship.
13. A French line-of-battle ship, a rear-admiral, topgallant yards up.
14. A Spanish line-of-battle ship, topmasts struck, and topgallant masts an end.

- No.
 15. A Spanish line-of-battle ship, main topmast struck and dismantled.
 16. A French line-of-battle ship, topgallant yards up and sails bent.
 17. A Spanish line-of-battle ship. Do. do.
 18. A French line-of-battle ship. Do. do.
 19. A French three-deck ship, topgallant yards across, no sails bent ; appears to be new fitted.

I observe the ships were moored from the north point, in the chosen ground of Brest Harbour ; in patches close together, and not drawn out in the order they usually are when they have an intention of proceeding to sea.

Deal, March 10th, 1802.

Dear Markham,—I am very much obliged to you for interesting yourself on my account on behalf of Mr. Skinner, whose commission for the Amazon is come down this morning and has made him very happy.

Having had a hint from Lord Nelson that he should not return again to Deal, I am very glad that you have approved of my broad pennant remaining in the Amazon, and trust that if I am ordered to sea that it will be in her. I hope that Mr. Bonaparte is not yet to be dealt with, and that we shall not be obliged to have recourse to arms again for that purpose ; he would, probably, sooner fall a victim to his insatiable ambition in its natural order ; however, that is far beyond human knowledge to dive into.

I hope Mrs. Markham and the young gentlemen enjoy good health, and that you are well. Mrs. Sutton is rather nervous in consequence of the late

c c

occurrence in the public world, and preparations that are making.

Will you allow me to mention to you the name of a trusty gunner's mate who has served in that capacity (four years) with me, and in the *Romulus*, *Egmont*, and *Superb* has been with me since the year 1794? He has passed for a gunner, and is qualified for a sloop or a frigate, and a trusty man.

I am glad to hear the earl continues his good health.

If you have leisure I shall be glad to hear that you are all well.

I do hope this definitive will come; its failure will be a severe blow; but if it must be so, 'tis in vain to complain.

Mrs. Sutton's kindest remembrance unites with mine to Mrs. Markham and to you.

FROM ADMIRAL GEORGE MONTAGU

Portsmouth, March 22nd, 1806.

My dear Sir,—You may be assured that I am as disinclined as the board can possibly be to prevent the standing (and more particularly the lower) rigging being lifted ; and it never has been allowed until the surveying master has reported it absolutely necessary, and these instances have not been many. You are to take into consideration that most of the small vessels on home service are fitted with old standing rigging, which I understand to have been the case in the present instance, and the rigging to have been found exceedingly bad by the surveying master, who appears to be a man of judgment and integrity. In the fitting and refitting of ships, I always make a point with the captain that the rigging shall keep pace with the artificers' work, and I have always found them to act up to my expectation.

Having it very much at heart to give satisfaction to the board, I cannot but feel mortified when I discover that I have not so done, and both Martin and myself put that construction on Mr. Marsden's letter, as well as that the order to report to the board before the standing rigging of any ship was lifted took from me a confidence which should be reposed in my zeal and abilities, if I am supposed to have any. Now, my dear sir, do not suppose me testy, or self-opinionated, for I really am neither, and only wish the board to give me credit for an anxious desire to promote their views and to pre-

vent as much as possible any delay taking place in the refitting ships at this port.

The *Paulina*, by the exertions of her captain, who I must name to you as a most zealous good officer, will be able to go to sea with the addition of a few boys only, and the *Dapper* shall be manned from the *Eclipse*, and some stout boys given to her as L.M.

The *Champion*, you know, came into the harbour on the 23rd of November last for the purpose of being surveyed, as it was supposed she would require considerable repairs, from which I should conclude she will not be ready by the time you want her. If the men who are come round in the *Tourterelle*, and the few remaining of the *Constant* are not wanted for the *Gibraltar*, they will go near to complete her. The *Camilla* has been in dock for some time, and I conclude must be nearly ready to go out.

I hope the *Ocean* will not put back ; if she does I shall stop her and her convoy at St. Helen's, as I really never wish to see her captain again ! I hope she will get safe to Lord Collingwood, for which purpose I strengthened her with fourteen men.

The men brought by *Tourterelle* are reported to be tolerably good. I have directed their being cleaned and fresh rated, both of which they much want ; her defects will show you that she should be caulked before she goes out again. I have desired them to be examined. Believe me, my dear sir,

Your faithful and obedient, humble servant,

GEO. MONTAGU.

P.S.—Martin tells me that *Champion* is reported ready for home service ; he has sent her some men, and will get her forward to go out of the harbour.

Portsmouth, March 24th, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I thank you for your congratulations on my friend Duckworth's success, and I hope Mr. Marsden has made mine acceptable to the board.

With the assistance of fifty or sixty men from the Royal William, and which we can give her after completing Tonnant and reserving enough for Champion, the Gibraltar, I should suppose, could go to Cawsand Bay with perfect safety; for which purpose I have hastened the getting off the remainder of her stores and provisions, and have directed my commander to inform Whidbey, who I conclude will be here to-morrow. If you should think proper to order her round, I will desire her to be furnished with extracts from the captain's books, for the purpose of the men being paid at Plymouth in preference to a partial payment taking place here.

It is my humble opinion that the six sail of the line that Duckworth chased off the Canary Islands will not be found to have gone to the West Indies, but I think Lieutenant Holmes is the first who will see them.

The Tonnant is to be paid to-morrow, and I hope Admiral Harvey will not have any wants left.

The Paulina and Dapper will put to sea on Wednesday, and I hope the Champion will be ready by the time you want her, for which purpose it is desirable that her captain should join. I am, my dear sir, &c.

Rear-Admiral Markham.

Portsmouth, 16th April, 1806.

My dear Sir,—You will see by the enclosed that out of the twenty-five men ordered to be sent to the Racehorse only seven could be drafted for her.

The men and boys brought round from Cork in the *Gorgon* are reported to me by her captain as a miserable gang. Perhaps they may look better after a little scrubbing and washing.

I shall hope to hear from you to-morrow about the *Chance's*¹ men, who are fair objects for being impressed, but who have entered, and I trust that no application will obtain their discharge.

Portsmouth, April 20th, 1806.

My dear Sir,—You and I cannot differ about the enclosed statement, and as I hope the *Alexandria* will get out of the harbour to-day, I wish to have your determination respecting the *Chance's* men. Her marines and boys will be given her, and if she has the *Chance's* men she will then go to sea twenty-four short of her short complement. I fear the *Diana* is got too far out for the *Royal William* to recall her, but I should suppose the *Elephant* must be round in time. The *Kingfisher* is perfectly ready, and so is the *Racehorse*, who, from want of exertion in her captain, had not got his stores off before yesterday or his list for payment ready. The *Camilla* will be out of the harbour in two or three days, and I should suppose would answer your purpose.

I take Mrs. Montagu into the country to-day, and shall be back to-morrow evening, or Tuesday morning by nine o'clock.

You say we want ships, but I think our present want is men.

It is a thick fog, but I have sent a sailing vessel to try and stop *Diana*.

¹ A cutter.

Portsmouth, 16th December, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I had flattered myself yesterday that we should have some fine weather, but the wind has again backed to the south-west and is blowing exceedingly hard, so that everything is again at a stand both at Spithead and in the harbour. Isis is ready, and will go to the Downs as soon as paid, which is only prevented by weather.

Orion, as you will see by the enclosed note, will not be ready before Thursday or Friday, and that depending on whether her provisions also are to be got on board, which the work of shipwrights and caulkers has prevented before.

I perfectly agree with you as to the manning ships and shall act upon your ideas. You will find by my public letter of yesterday that the master of the *St. George* is moving. It was no wish of his to quit the ship, but Bertie assures me that he has not done the least duty for the last five months.

The commissioner in reply to my enquiry informs me that the weather is so bad that no report has yet been obtained of the *Magnificent's* mainmast. Murray is eating up his sea stock at *St. Helen's* and wishes himself at *Chichester*. Hood will soon lose his patience as well as his arm.

I hear there are 200 sail of vessels in the Downs, most of them to go with the *St. George* and the convoys that sail with her. I shall therefore, without further orders, use the authority of your letter to direct Bertie to wait twenty-four hours after the wind comes to the eastward. Very strong injunctions are laid on surveying captains, and I really believe they do not cast any men that can be of the least use. If government would put a stop to the American carrying trade the navy would not want seamen. Be assured half the men we discharge as Americans are English seamen, of which fact there

cannot be the least doubt either in yours or my mind, but how to prove it is the difficulty. Very sincerely, my dear sir, &c.

Portsmouth, February 1st, 1807.

My dear Sir,—I have to thank God that my poor child has not had any return of fever for the last twenty-four hours, and I trust that the worst is over, as this is the twenty-sixth day of her confinement to her bed, mostly in a state of delirium! You can imagine the distress and anxiety of our minds.

I shall avail myself of the board's indulgence and go home late this afternoon, in order that I may arrange my house for the removal of my family. Everything here is, I hope, as forward as you wish and expect. The Redwing is sailed at last, but there has been much tardiness in her so doing. With respect to men for the Dreadnought and Audacious, we can only have recourse to the disposable for them, for we find all the men protected that we press; it will nearly require eighty men to complete them. I cannot hear of the young runaway, and it is my opinion that he did not come down here; certain it is that he is not on board any of the king's ships at this port.

Most sincerely do I congratulate you on this most glorious and eventful news from the Continent, and hope in God the Russians will not let the French go into winter quarters, which they appear to pant for. I remain, my dear sir, &c.

Have you any new raised landsmen coming round here?

*FROM CAPTAIN THE HON. GEORGE
GREY¹*

Portsmouth, September 15, 1806.

Dear Markham,—All the Ardent's foreign stores are shipped on board a lock-up lighter, ready to go off to sea on her arrival, and everything for the Centaur shall be at hand, so that no delay can arise.

The Atlas has all her stores, and will, I hope, be ready for her flag by Wednesday evening. When I say ready, I mean with respect to brass locks, &c., &c., which she will not wait for, I suppose, if wanted before. Charwell and Pheasant will also have all their stores by to-morrow; at least it will not rest with the yard if they have not. The Spencer is complete, but why she came to Spithead was a wonder to me; her warrant officers came to her at St. Helens, and had their stores immediately shipped by the convicts; and from what Martin told me, I understood her coming was in consequence of orders from the admiralty, and it rests entirely between you and Admiral Montagu. I hope you do not calculate on Ardent as a flyer; it is a pity to put such a beast in a squadron with such fine ships as Centaur, Atlas, and Spencer, either in a chase or voyage. The flat boats will be ready before the transports are ready to receive them, and I have told old Potter that he may have five whenever he chooses to send for them. Our people went off this morning to fix the skids.

¹ Brother of Lord Howick: resident commissioner at Portsmouth; baronet in 1874.

May¹ and the children all well, and if this immense house does not ruin us, I feel that I shall like the situation very much. She desires her best compliments, and believe me

Yours very sincerely,
GEO. GREY.

I have a letter written in most famous spirits from Lord St. Vincent, but nothing public.

September 18th, 1806.

Dear Markham,—We congratulate you on the safety of Mrs. Markham and the little girl, who, I trust, will do and thrive as well as the little hussy we have, who arrived when at Torquay; however as these are not quite as pleasant as regular confinements, we shall be anxious to hear again, and hope you may be able to spare a moment to let us know in the course of a day or two.

I do not like the report I hear about changes likely to take place at the admiralty, and shall be on the fidget until I know the truth.

We shall be ready for the Centaur when she arrives, and have got all her foreign stores, as well as Ardent's, shipped and ready to go off. The Néréide got on shore on the Horse Sand during the night, but got off this high water. I have not heard any particulars, nor is the master attendant returned with the craft he took off this morning.

The Champion has returned in consequence of a leak. Our people are off to examine, but can hardly be back in time to report by this post. I know her to be very bad. Mrs. Grey¹ begs her best remembrances, and believe me, &c.

¹ Mary, sister of Mr. Whitbread, M.P. for Bedford. They were married in 1795.

[*Private.*]

Portsmouth, September 20.

Dear Markham,—I have received a letter from Admiral Montagu this day which surprises me very much, acquainting me he had received directions from the lords of the admiralty to communicate with the master shipwright respecting the *Adamant*, and requesting I will cause a report to be made to him for their information when she will be ready as far as relates to the dockyard. This mode of proceeding on the part of the admiral is perfectly correct, and I have caused a report to be sent to me, which he shall have; but you must excuse me if I say that I think it most particularly irregular directing any person whatever to communicate with any officer of the dockyard except the commissioner, and it is what I can never allow of, for I have never yet permitted any answer ever to be given whatever whereby a report can be framed that does not go through me. I therefore hope you see this in the light I do, and whenever the admiralty want a report from the dockyard, they will send their directions direct to the commissioner, without which it is impossible the service can go on well; however, whichever way the board please to act, no delay shall arise on my part, but a commissioner may be at a yard who will not act as I do. We are happy to hear such good accounts of Mrs. Markham, and I am happy to give excellent of all belonging to me. I am, &c.

The *Adamant* will be completed by the yard on Tuesday—perhaps to-morrow. It is the sick bay and water-closet that is not finished.

October 3rd.

Dear Markham,—You must not fancy me a psalm singer for this letter, but really if religion and

morality are of consequence, the present representation ought to be attended to; as such I beg to recommend it to the serious consideration of the board. Our ordinary is so extensive and the ships lay so far from the dockyard, it is impossible for the people to come to the chapel; therefore as no one clergyman can perform both the duty in the chapel and to the people afloat without neglecting one of them, and the people in the ordinary here are in the habit of going on shore to Barns every Sunday—where the purest doctrine is not preached either as to honesty or towards God—I wish to propose that Cuthbert, who now is chaplain to the prison ships, should be appointed to do duty to the ordinary during the war, every other Sunday (as he only officiates every other Sunday to the prison ships), at an increase of salary, making the whole 200*l. per ann.*; and if approved of at the peace, to be continued to do duty every Sunday to the ordinary. His present income arising from the prison ships is upwards of 120*l.*, and I really think it will be money well laid out; but I by no means would wish to reduce the income of the chaplain to the dockyard. Do think about this and let me hear from you on the subject.

How provoking for S. Hood to have lost his arm by a musket ball! however, he is doing well. He intends going into the Isle of Wight. Who will succeed him in the command of the expedition? I hear the army are outrageous about Colonel Craufurd, and I am outrageous about the change that has taken place at your board, and still more so to hear you are all going; for it is a great satisfaction to find from all quarters that you are regretted, and which from my heart I believe to be the case with the generality of the service. I am exceedingly sorry to hear from

Martin that you have been so unwell, but trust that you are better, and also that you have good accounts from Eastbourne. Mrs. Grey desires her best compliments, and believe me, &c.

I wish these troops were off for Buenos Ayres, where, notwithstanding what the Piedmontese captain says, I feel the French frigates were bound. I also hope you will complete Cochrane to eight sail of good ships in the course of next month, to guard against these five sail he says are to sail for St. Domingo.

Thursday.

Dear Markham,—I have had some conversation with Diddams respecting Leander, which, if we take the people who are now on *Téméraire* and put on her, with what were to have been employed when the report of yesterday was made, she may, we think, be ready for three years' foreign service in a month. If you mean we should do so, give us a telegraph message. A Russian squadron has arrived at Spithead, and as I do not know how to act about giving them any stores, or closing the yard to the officers, I have written to the admiralty for instructions.

[*Private.*]

Dear Markham,—I am glad we have got the *Malta* into dock, for the knee of the head requires a good deal of work and cannot be finished under twelve days or a fortnight, but no complaint can be made of the work done at Plymouth, which was everything that could have been done afloat; it is also lucky she is docked on account of her copper, which was in consequence of short nails of new copper beginning to peel off.

Enclosed I send you a comparative account of her topgallant masts and jib-boom, with the proper

establishment, which, though not much out of the way, yet ought in my opinion to be put a stop to, and if we are of the same opinion, you had better send down an order for us to report whether she has any of these masts larger than the establishment; indeed, were a general order to that effect sent to all the port admirals and dockyards, it would be the means of saving many a mast; for really it is tremendous to see the royal mast; sky scraper mast, &c., that most ships have now.

From what Buller says, and when I look back to the good sailing of *Fury* when under reduced masts, and how soon the *Sans Pareil* was worn out, masted as *Malta* is at present, I am convinced she would be a better ship were they to be reduced, and 18-pounders given on the main-deck instead of 24's. This Buller wishes himself. I very much fear that it will not be possible to do anything with the *Volontaire* without taking up a dock for too long a period, and yet she is almost too good to break up; but I believe it will be the cheapest way to do so.

Captain Searle, of the *Grasshopper*, is in great tribulation, lest his letter requesting to be superseded from the *Fury* may have been construed into a wish to get on half pay, as he omitted saying—from the *Fury* to enable him to attend to the equipment of the brig, which he had directed the boatswain to undertake; therefore should there be any mistake pray get it rectified.

Amethyst cannot be taken in hand this fortnight.

May will be much obliged if you will let the enclosed be forwarded to the *Warrior*.

I have just got a letter from Lord St. Vincent, much pleased with some promotions you have given him, but terribly out of humour with my brother.

*FROM CAPTAIN T. B. MARTIN**To Commissioner Fanshawe.*

Kitley, December 21st, 1804.

My dear Sir,—I lose not a moment in replying to your letter communicating the contents of one from Admiral Markham, which, as it implies a suspicion of my being the author of a pamphlet defamatory of the character and conduct of himself and late colleagues in office, has excited in my mind a degree of astonishment and indignation that I am utterly unable to express, and I shall only briefly declare that I did not write the manuscript alluded to, nor do I know who did ; it came to me in common circulation, and went direct to your hands. I must now beg to observe that Admiral Markham, in appealing to your friendship and probity of character to assist in detecting a secret assassin, invites a confidence in his disposition to do the same, and I think it very much behoves us to avail ourselves of so manly a profession to solicit a knowledge of the spy and informer of our most secret communications, that the wretch may appear to the public clothed in that despicable character.

I write in haste, and have only time to add that

I am ever truly yours,

T. B. MARTIN.

To Robert Fanshawe, Esq., Dockyard.

To Admiral Markham.

Plymouth, October 14, 1806.

Dear Sir,—I have written to Mr. Grenville by this day's post begging to be considered as a candidate for the command of the Royal Sovereign, and I shall hold myself greatly obliged by any assistance you may have the goodness to give to the application, as also if you will explain to Mr. G. the necessity I have been under of continuing on shore while Mrs. Martin was so alarmingly ill. She is now, thank God! materially better, and I am exceedingly solicitous to get the Royal Sovereign in preference to any other ship, trusting, by the time of her equipment, I may leave Mrs. M. without that misery and anxiety which would attend an earlier separation, and, what is infinitely more important, the risk of checking her amendment. Thus situated I am persuaded nothing more need be said to obtain your intercession in order to place my application in a fair point of view, and to excuse its not being of a more general nature. Mrs. Martin desires to be most kindly remembered to you and Mrs. Markham, and I am ever, my dear sir, very faithfully, &c.

P.S.—The Royal Sovereign having no poop has induced me to suppose she would be commissioned as a private ship.

Plymouth, October 29th, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I very much fear Mr. Grenville considers my application for the Royal Sovereign as a general wish for employment, with only a preference for that particular ship, and as it really may be of great importance to rectify such a misconception, you will oblige me exceedingly by stating that I solicited a nomination to the Royal Sovereign because she

was to fit at this port, and by the time of her being ready I could flatter myself Mrs. Martin's health would be sufficiently re-established to allow of my leaving her ; but at present she is not in a condition to bear any agitation of mind. So situated I still persist in wishing for a ship at Plymouth, and if the Neptune should be ordered here to repair, nothing could gratify me more than being appointed to her. I trust you will do me the justice to believe that I am one of the last people who would turn and twist the service to private convenience ; but considering what Mrs. Martin has undergone, and what she still suffers, I hope to be excused in endeavouring to reconcile professional callings with what is due to her. I am very troublesome to you, and it will only make the matter worse to add the thousand apologies I owe, but pray let me beg you to accept, and present to Mrs. Markham, our united regards.

P.S.—I flatter myself the election here is going on prosperously. Sir W. Elford is greatly behind-hand.

FROM COMMISSIONER FANSHAWE

Plymouth Yard, 5th January, 1805.

Dear Sir,—It has ever been my pride to be admitted in your friendship, and my wish to cultivate it. I am, indeed, greatly sensible of the great kindness which you have evidently shown to me and to mine.

The pamphlet in question¹ I do not recollect to have seen or heard of, other than by my understanding that the MS. sent for my perusal was copy of a pamphlet suppressed. I communicated to Captain Martin your former letter expressing your wish to trace circulation of the MS. to its source, of which I beg to assure you that I am ignorant. I certainly did indulge in one hasty perusal of the MS., and deemed the pamphlet of which it was supposed to be a copy to be the

¹ A pamphlet of sixty pages, signed 'Aristides,' in the form of a letter to Lord St. Vincent. It is a scurrilous attack upon him, Sir Thomas Troubridge and Admiral Markham, for their administration of the navy. The writer was no doubt employed by the numerous class of jobbers, who were furious at the exposure of abuses in the dockyards. The copies of the pamphlet were bought up by an unknown friend for 2,000*l.* on the morning of publication; but several manuscript copies were sent about—Captain T. Byam Martin certainly had one. Mr. Pitt, when he began his attack on Mr. Addington's government, selected the admiralty as the most unpopular department, owing to the sweeping reforms in the dockyards. His pamphlet *Audi Alteram Partem* (1804) contains the substance of the suppressed libel by 'Aristides,' who must have been a tool of Pitt.

wretched production of a bad head and worse heart. Captain Martin entertained similar sentiments respecting it, and, in conceiving that circulation of its purport was imputed to him, showed that indignation which arose on such an idea. How he came by the MS. I know no more than what he signified in his letter, which I transmitted to you.

I will not, my dear sir, disguise from you the sentiment which affected my mind on reading your former letter, that an insidious person (from motives for which I cannot give him credit) had, by communicating to Lord St. Vincent and yourself, knowledge of Captain Martin's having sent me the MS., endeavoured to interrupt the friendship which I have always held in highest estimation, and I beg leave to add that such communication affords strong presumptive evidence of that person being well acquainted with [the] circulation of the MS., and better able than myself or Captain Martin to give you information relative thereto.

That yourself, Mrs. Markham, and family may enjoy in health and comfort many returns of this season is the hearty wish of, dear sir,

Your faithful, humble servant,

ROBT. FANSHAWE.

J. Markham, Esq.

FROM CAPTAIN LITTLEHALES

My dear Captain M.,—I have this moment received yours of the 16th. I am not surprised at your being affected at the death of our worthy, gallant friend ;¹ for my own part I have not, I assure you, since the death of my mother, heard of anything that has affected me half so much. I grieve and mourn for him from the bottom of my heart ; he was to me a friend at all times in adversity and in prosperity, when a prisoner and in sickness ; his loss I shall ever lament. I have yet received no letter from the admiralty except to apply for a court-martial on James Sullivan, which I shall do directly. I will consult the commissioner and Captain Lane about your wine ; the two cases of ten dozen I have put with the rest ; if the transport sail with your furniture only, another will be soon about to sail. I think a treasury order for the removal of the wine might have been obtained ; if it does go to the custom house here I will have some one looking out against tricks.

I have by the commissioner's desire just sent young Kelly on shore to him for a few days, and I

¹ Captain Edward Riou, killed in the battle of Copenhagen. Littlehales was with him in the *Rose* at the capture of Martinique, and afterwards in the *Beaulieu* during a severe outbreak of yellow fever. In the celebrated action with the *Droits de l'homme*, Littlehales was first lieutenant of the *Amazon*, and on her wreck, was made prisoner, but was soon exchanged, and after the court-martial, was promoted.

have ordered him some clothes as he begins to be shabby. I am glad to find that the fever has not spread and we have no sick. Your books and accounts will go this day I believe from the commissioner's office. I hope we shall be able to take in the Morton on Monday, and that the shipwrights will have done about Friday or Saturday. Mr. Brown¹ is quite in the dumps because he is not superseded—the master of the Neptune is, I find, still in her. Masters are much wanted; the Orion has none, and there will be a difficulty in getting one. Wishing you health and happiness, I remain, with best remembrances to Mrs. M.,

Yours faithfully,

B. R. LITTLEHALES.

Centaur, 18 April [1801].²

Mr. Wright and Mr. Elias have behaved ill in not attending to their duty when sent to the yard, and by quitting the yard allowed two men to desert. I have therefore disrated them both, and broke a corporal who was absent also. Mr. Wright has written to me to discharge him into the Cambridge, which I have taken no notice of at all.

¹ William Brown, the master. He was superseded on April 29th.

² By the postmark.

*FROM CAPTAIN THE HON.
ROBERT STOPFORD*

My dear Sir,—Though the late board of admiralty from a sentiment of public duty thought it necessary to order me under arrest, I trust and flatter myself that no individual at the board thought so much for my condemnation as my acquittal.

In this opinion, as far as it regards you, and which I am surely entitled to entertain from the many acts of kindness and friendship I have received from you, I trust you will wish to hear that I have not shrunk from enquiry, but demanded it.

As a public man, publicly accused, this step was absolutely necessary on the ground of public justice to myself, and was taken with as little acrimony to any individual as attended the act of accusation.

The enclosed copies of letters will show that I have every reason to be satisfied with the opinion of the present admiralty upon the subject.¹

This matter being now over, permit me to return my most sincere thanks for the every proof of friendship I received from you when in office. I go to Portsmouth to-morrow, and have therefore no chance of seeing you. Believe me, my dear sir,

Very truly yours,

ROBERT STOPFORD.

London, June 29th.

¹ The correspondence on the subject of the court-martial on Captain R. Stopford for disobedience of orders will probably appear in vol. ii. of the Society's Miscellany.

*COPY OF ADMIRAL MARKHAM'S
REPLY*

July 3rd, 1807.

Dear Stopford,—I was very sorry not to have seen you in town, and that I had no opportunity of a personal communication, so much more desirable on every account than by letter. I received yours of 29th ulto. on my arrival again in town, and I can assure you that no part of the discharge of my public duty at the board ever gave me so much pain as the necessity which occurred of calling you to account for the breach of the orders under which you were sent to the Cape de Verds. I do not dwell upon the mischievous consequences attending it, nor enter into any discussion of the subject *pro* or *con*, because I consider this letter, as I am sure you meant your own, as a testimony of my regard, and an assurance of a continuance of those sentiments which I trust the execution of the public office I hold has not interrupted between us, since I am certain (and ever held that language) that no act of yours, however contrary to the orders you were under, arose from any motive which was not honourable in itself, however mistaken and detrimental to the intended plans of those from whom they originated.

I can assure you that whatever promotes your interests and happiness is not indifferent to me, and I hope that a conscientious discharge of our public functions will hazard no diminution of regard on either side. In which belief I remain, dear Stopford,

Ever yours faithfully,

J. M.

FROM SIR RICHARD STRACHAN

Cæsar, [May] 10th, 1806.

My dear Sir,—I beg to offer you my sincere congratulations upon your being again at the board. I hope if you wish me to do anything for you at Madeira you will lay your commands, and you will make me happy by putting it in my power to show my readiness in obeying your wishes. I beg my best respects to my good friend Mrs. Markham, and with every wish for your happiness believe me always, with sincere regard and esteem, &c.

[*Confidential.*]

The Princess of Wales being here I am rather annoyed in being obliged to pay my attentions, which prevents my giving you a longer letter. I am as bad as ever. Can talk of nothing but ships. Very uncomfortable being admiral ; don't trim sails now.

Cæsar, off the Sound, May 19, 1806.

My dear Sir,—Thanks for your last letter. We had light flattering airs yesterday from the south, which prevented our getting out. Cawsand Bay is very awkward if there is many ships in it. This morning the Audacious in getting under way backed on board us. Nothing could be more vexing ; we had great way, and so near the point we could not bear up. Her stern is entirely torn out from the centre to the starboard galleries, which are also

carried away, with a good deal of other damage. Several of our main chain plates got parted, the channel carried away, some timbers on the upper deck broke, and lower-deck ports damaged ; a man killed, and a mate so much wounded I doubt his recovery. I was unfortunately in the cabin with Sir T. Hardy. Perhaps the accident would not have happened if I had been with my eye on deck.

Keats and Hardy both think it would not ; the primary fault was Audacious. It would take near a month to repair her in the yard. I have decided it shall be done at sea. She will be just as good to take a Frenchman, and they will work hard to close up their present airy cabin and wardroom. All the carpenters decided the ship could not sail with safety. They expected a harbour job. I sent Keats and Hardy, two treasures, who shook their heads. However, out she comes, and I hope will take a French 80. I shall take care to leave the rendezvous and attend to every other order, and your friendly hints. We have taken in as much provisions as we could stow and keep clear ships. It is a good sailing squadron, and you have a right to expect we shall do something. Admiral Young took the men merely to accommodate Hood. It was from his partiality that I was so much vexed. He left it till the last moment, knowing that there would not be time for explanation. To his favourites he is very kind. He is no friend to any of Lord S. V.'s people, or any of you, rest assured. I have seen so many instances of his partiality that I cannot bear him. I fear Mr. Tucker too has few friends, notwithstanding all the navy acknowledge his very great merit. When the Princess of Wales went in the yard they never presented him. I was determined he should be known, and as we were in the shell of the *Caledonia* gave him an opportunity to speak of the manner of the

work going on upon that ship and the men employed, which I find has given great offence to some folks. I hope in God I shall be able to do something. I cannot express how very grateful I am to you all, and yourself in particular. God grant I justify your choice.

I am ever, my dear sir, with sincere respect,

Your very much obliged,

RD. J. STRACHAN.

Cæsar, 8th February, 1807.

My dear Sir,—I rejoice to hear you are well, and offer you many sincere thanks for your friendly letter. I am very happy at my return, and have only the unpleasant sensation of having done nothing and returning empty handed, which at times damps the joy I should otherwise feel at being in old England. It would have been rather dreary in the Chesapeake, for I doubt whether the enemy's ships will think of starting for the winter; indeed the . . . [*seal*] cannot be got ready. But I am not at all obliged to Admiral Berkeley for sending me home, or the decided manner in which he thought proper to take the ships from under my orders and put them under Douglas. The Cæsar before I joined was not thought by him to be too large for the Chesapeake, and had he found it necessary to keep her, I suppose I might have been advised by him to swim home. I think a junior admiral may be subjected to many unpleasant things on his falling in with or going on the station of superior officers, and is much worse off than the captain of any ship, or even his own captain, who cannot be turned out without giving him another ship.

To answer the part of your letter respecting Cæsar, it seems to be the opinion of all on board

that the copper cannot be repaired at Spithead, and that there are some particular defects about the rudder, which certainly works exceedingly ; but the carpenter is a very deficient, skulking man, and they are all interested to justify themselves for not getting it done at Halifax, where they were more employed in giving balls and dancing than attending to their duty. The consequence was that the rigging was so much neglected that, when she did go to sea, they sprung a new mainmast, and would have lost it if the gale had not ceased. I shall get the builder to send off some intelligent persons to examine into these things. I have not seen the copper myself, but I still think it may be repaired, if the ship can be spared long enough, without docking. I am myself much attached to her and prefer her, organised as she is, to any other ship. Masts, rigging, sails, men healthy, everything in good order, it would be a sin to break up all this by a docking job ; and therefore, if the ship is wanted she may run as she is for a little while without the bottom being injured by the worm getting in from the copper being off. We have had such tempestuous weather that we have frequently been obliged to keep the lower yards down at sea, and for two months have only had the topgallant sails set a few hours, the weather in general being so bad as to oblige us to have all our booms off the yards and topgallant masts on deck, and spritsail yards in. With timely precaution I verily believe ships may keep the sea in any weather. Yet such is the strength of the ship that she requires caulking in very few parts, and only about the counter outside.

I have been very uneasy at leaving my affairs in a most unsettled state when I left England, and wish much to have permission to be in town for a few days, as my presence there is indispensable.

I have therefore written for leave, which I hope will not be disapproved of by the board, and as I think my request will be granted, and I shall have the pleasure of seeing you, I shall not now take up more of your time than to assure you of my being, with every sentiment of respect and regard, my dear sir, &c.

I do not share with Berkeley—at least I suppose he does not mean to let me—as he gave the captains of the ships orders to consider themselves ‘under his command in my absence.’

Dear Markham,—I am vexed beyond measure at the change likely to take place, but I make no doubt with regard to yourself you are not sorry, for you have had a very arduous, tiresome task, and have not always met that gratitude which your zeal and disinterestedness deserved. I was better yesterday and am well enough to go out to-day, having just come to town, and as I am uneasy fearing our chief will send Cæsar away, I propose setting out, but not to travel all night. However, I wish to ascertain whether she has sailed from Portsmouth. You probably know at the admiralty, therefore tell me whether Cæsar is ordered to wait for me, or to follow Lord St. V.’s orders, for if he wants a ship, you know he will not hesitate a moment to use her, and I need not remind you that he is something of the character of Percy in the play of ‘Henry IV.,’ who, speaking of his father being ill, says, ‘How has he time to be sick?’ He will say so of me and wish me at the devil. I have another inducement to hasten down, from a supposition that the new folk may alter one’s station, and I have also a wish to meet Lord St. Vincent, who, in this new order of things, may not be disposed to remain where he is.

Will he leave it before I get down? Do have the goodness to tell me all this, and rest assured of my secrecy and discretion, for no person can be more attached to his lordship and all his friends more than myself, and I may venture to say all this now without the appearance or suspicion of flattering, as you are all on the move; perhaps I would not have said so much if you had remained in. I still have a gleam of hope that things may remain as they are. Do send me an answer as soon as you can, because I am in all the agonies of preparation.

Tuesday, 10 o'clock.

[March 17th, 1807 (?).]

FROM SIR ISAAC COFFIN

My dear Markham,—If Pigeon, Wagtail, Magpie, and Quail were to be allowed to rendezvous in any secure situation, in lieu of driving about Spithead, as they do now incessantly, his Majesty's service would be much benefited. I wish Captain Laroche was at the devil; *entre nous*, he is the most headstrong and inefficient man here—except Indefatigable, who is literally good for nothing.

Everybody seems to be slack in stays but the commissioner.

Always faithfully yours,
ISAAC COFFIN.

Friday, 4th December, 1806.

Portsmouth, 12th December.

My dear Markham,—Before I wrote you on the subject of the *Gladiator* I had advised with Admiral Montagu. If it has not come to you before, the inconvenience is not less. Figure to yourself a moment your flag flying in a ship where the commander is a lieutenant, a cripple, obliged to attend daily, nay, hourly, at the hospital and dockyard about invalids, and often the whole duty of the harbour left to be executed by warrant officers. Men put on board for security, going in at one side and out of the other, with a thousand other irregularities, and you will best judge whether some little improvement is not necessary.

All will, I trust, be ready to meet your wishes when the ships come from the Downs, if these cursed hard squalls do not blow the mainmasts out of their ships.

I hope when the Halifax station again becomes vacant Mr. Grenville or any first lord will give it me ; for however you may discredit the puffs, all America would be glad to see me there, and I flatter myself with the interest I have in that quarter I could at least keep them quiet ; but if I am to be kept in trammels here until my powers are gone, which will shortly be the case, then I shall be good for nothing.

When at Quebec I enquired about the hemp : little, very little, is made in Upper Canada, and none, I believe, in the United States. Almost all they have is carried from Petersburg or Riga.

Perhaps you have seen my account, which was sent me here from one Mr. Price, the printer : 47 $\frac{1}{2}$. for puffing.

Almost done up with the rough stones in the dockyard. Very gouty.

[*Private.*]

Dear Markham,—I cannot recollect either when here before, or since my arrival from America, that any one thing suggested by me for the good of the service or my private convenience has had the smallest attention from the board. Now as I do not recollect having asked anything unbecoming my station, I do consider this as harsh treatment and as leading to degrade me materially in the eyes of the service. I beg in one line simply to say it does not tend to increase my energy, and will only serve to induce me to make my situation a sort of sinecure, which it is said my predecessor did.

When Mr. Grenville offered me the appointment I certainly did expect to be treated with some degree of respect, at least like a gentleman. I am not a grumbler or disposed to cavil, but there are bounds to patience, beyond which I cannot go.

After this candid explanation I never will publicly or privately submit myself to be again refused what most certainly in my humble judgment my rank entitles me to. It appears as if as little respect was intended to be paid to a flag officer as the meanest individual in the service, which I am sorry for.

Portsmouth, 11th February, 1807.

[*Private.*]

Portsmouth, 14th February, 1807.

Dear Markham,—*Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit* is my answer. In going about the harbour and off to the court-martial, the whole community, high and low, whores and rogues, abused me and my old rascally boat's crew, who were catching crabs fore and aft. This set my back up and produced the philippic.

I have told Brenton if he manages well before he leaves the Indiamen they may probably give him a man or two out of each ship. They do say much of the copper is off Cæsar's bottom. Thank Fremantle for his note.

Sunday.

My dear Markham,—No sermon ever set forth from the pulpit of a Methodist preacher has equalled mine on the score of crippling masts; the whole is to be attributed to the outset, and however you and the other sapient men at the board may laugh at my printing a book, because you all know more than I do, still nine-tenths of the captains, masters, and boatswains are as ignorant as pigs, and to this base

stupidity may you attribute half the disasters we meet with. To be obliged to discuss a subject with men who ornament their ships with everything that is preposterous, and attempt to make you believe it is done on principle, is irksome.

We must grow old, and when you are told my dancing days are over, you will believe my feet are failing me; for my inclination is as great as when poor Bladen Tinker¹ was inclined to call me out for putting my leg over his head one evening when we left a delightful party at South Audley Street. Now, alas! dispersed all over England.

¹ Presumably a son of Captain Bladen Tinker (d. 1767), a follower, if not also a relation of Lord Hawke. Coffin at this date was two years short of 50.

FROM SIR ROGER CURTIS

64 Jermyn Street, 10th June, 6 P.M.

My dear Sir,—I am at length arrived in London, and should have left Portsmouth the day after I struck my flag, but Lady Curtis was so dangerously ill I could not leave her. She has not, nor will ever recover from the grief with which she has been afflicted by the loss of my son. She has told me much of your goodness towards her, and is very grateful for it, and so am I.

I particularly request you will do me the favour to let me know this evening by a short note, at what time to-morrow morning it will be the most likely for me to have the honour of paying my respects to Lord St. Vincent, which I wish to do as soon as may be, that I may go into dock under the care of Sir James Earle,¹ with a view to be made without delay fit for service.

I am with great esteem, my dear sir,
Most faithfully yours,
ROGER CURTIS.

Captain Markham, &c., &c., &c.

¹ The distinguished surgeon, more especially famous for his skill in lithotomy. He died in 1817.

*COPY OF A LETTER TO ADMIRAL
GAMBIER¹*

Hard gales from the SW, which I hope will bring the fleet into Tor Bay. I say I hope so because it is useless to keep the sea, and the expense of the damage received must be enormous in the bad weather we have had for these six weeks past. Our ships stationed off Brest have had a considerable share of luck hitherto, but depend upon it that some serious losses will open your eyes before the winter is over if the mode hitherto adopted is continued; from the share I have had in shore, I ought to be some judge of the very dangerous situation in which they are often placed, wherein the loss of a mast or yard must inevitably end in that of the ship. It is true Douarnenez Bay and the Passage du Raz afford the one shelter, and the other a passage with the wind at NW; but in the long winter nights and thick weather, together with the uncertainty of a ship's situation from the various set of the tides as well as their unequal rates, a ship may be lost, or so entangled before she can know her situation, as to render these last resources impracticable.

I have been much concerned at the order for all captains and commanders to sleep constantly on

¹ It does not appear who was the writer of this letter. It refers to a very unpopular order given by Lord St. Vincent at Tor Bay in 1801.

board their ships in Cawsand Bay, and the Sound ; which, though a revival of an obsolete order in some part, is now definite, since the admiralty has not authority to allow it, if it was necessary. The order was issued in the common order book, for the amusement and ridicule of the lieutenants, warrant and petty officers, and foremast men, and the effect it has already had in lowering the consequence and degrading the situation of the captain is very visible. If you weaken some of the main shores which prop the vessel of the state on one side, without the power of reducing those on the other, she must soon overset from the inequality of resistance ; and that the captains and lieutenants are those shores, and that they have of late both been hardly dealt with, and degraded in their rank, is too obvious to every one to require comment from me. The crews of all the ships are highly discontented ; they gained every point they demanded in last mutiny, and are well aware of their strength. Some respect still remains for the situation and character of their officers, for those whom they are in the habit of obeying, for those with whom they are immediately connected—it is more personal, and arising from daily intercourse ; but that respect once removed, depend upon it they have no remote one, nor would they owe any obedience in their ideas to any government whatever. You have already seen admiral or admiralty equally despised by them, and I very much fear the same thing may happen again from the measures now pursued. If the times are ticklish, it more behoves us to be guarded in our experiments, and consider that after eight years of war and hard service, when our labours increase, and our pleasures lessen in proportion, it is not a time to draw the strings too tight, and to pillage us of the little relaxations left us after a trying and hazardous campaign. A

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consideration of the consequences to be apprehended from the lower classes has prevented a remonstrance to the admiralty hitherto, and I hope good sense on either side will not urge matters too far ; but the spirit of discontent is universal, and I sincerely pray for the good of the country it may not break forth before a peace is concluded.

FROM LORD GARLIES

Cove, March 27, 1801.

My dear Markham,—I have received yours, and Lord St. Vincent's first letter of February 20 offering me Robust, together this morning. Had I received it sooner I might have been puzzled, though I do not like to follow ; the Bellerophon I shall like very much, and look forward to. If you will expedite my successor here, I may perhaps have a few days clear of duty on shore ; otherwise I shall have to begin with Bellerophon immediately. I am to sail with the convoy a certain distance, but shall return direct if I am not superseded first ; but the SW wind may last if you send him at once. Brown is a great friend of mine, and I regret less giving up to him so fine a frigate. I am sorry the admiralty board thus intend to evince their regard to your friends, and though the service may in this instance require it, it may extend to many other ; it, however, continues one consolation, that since I have served I have never experienced any arrangement of convenience yet, and I like that independent feeling ; I suppose also we must not expect a petty officer. I have no followers, but would wish to assist the outfit of the Bellerophon with a few deserving characters that Hussar can spare. Recollect I fitted her out from the docks, and she is a creation in a manner of my own, every officer being an original appointment of my own choice ; and though I ask for a 74, to give up Hussar 40—is not that also

giving up something ? If Bellerophon is to belong to the Brest fleet, which I hope, Lady Garlies will jump at Mrs. M.'s offer of the cottage at Torbay. I must not write to you long letters now.

Yours sincerely,

GARLIES.

Pray send Brown ;¹ and give me also a respite, which I want to settle many private articles.

I passed all last November and December at Portsmouth from my accident : not seven days at home.

¹ Captain William Brown. He died, rear-admiral and commander-in-chief at Jamaica, in 1814.

FROM SIR THOMAS GRAVES

Foudroyant, Cawsand Bay, December 27th, 1803.

Sir,—I am extremely sorry to inform you that, since I had the honour of writing to you my letter of yesterday's date, we have this morning discovered the enclosed defects. The state of the stern post was not known till they were shifting the tiller, which was broken in the rudder-head; and from the very improper stowage of the hold, particularly the iron ballast, they have destroyed all the good qualities of one of the finest ships in the world, by making her labour so much that it was fortunate we preserved her masts the few days we have been at sea. The enclosed papers will give you the best account I can procure of the state of the hold, and I have only to add that this ship has a heel to starboard of some inches which we have never been able to correct, and that the great expense of sails and rigging, which ought to have lasted more months than we have been days at sea, was owing to the improper placing of the iron ballast, which has made her labour so much as to make it impossible for such men as we have got to hold themselves on the yards, or even wood and iron to resist. I am so anxious to return to my station that I trust you will pardon my not having waited on you in person, as I think my being on board will expedite my wishes of getting again to sea. Captain Spicer will, I hope,

be able to send our sails off this morning, as I sent him last night, on our arrival here, to wait upon you with the necessary demands.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

THOS. GRAVES.

To Sir John Colpoys, K.B.,¹

Admiral of the Blue, &c., &c., &c.

¹ The commander-in-chief at Plymouth; a lord of the admiralty in the next administration, 1804-5.

FROM JOSHUA ROWLEY, ESQ.¹

Roleston Hall, January 29th, 1801.

Dear Sir,—Permit me to seize this opportunity of renewing an acquaintance which has been interrupted for some years ; the pleasure I experienced in the many happy days we passed together about six years ago, when you very unexpectedly was ordered to proceed to the West Indies, embolden me to hope so long a separation has not entirely obliterated me from your remembrance. With this idea I am induced to give this letter of introduction to Mr. Canon, who I find is appointed chaplain to your ship, and who I am most fully convinced will prove himself both as a scholar and a gentleman equal to your wishes and deserving of your esteem. I have ventured to assert this from having passed some months in Pembrokeshire on a visit to Mr. Scourfield,² in which time I have had opportunities of knowing the many excellent qualities of this young man. Should you ever come into Suffolk you will make me excessively happy in spending some time with me, and believe me

Your obliged, humble servant,

JOSHUA ROWLEY.

¹ Son of Admiral Sir Joshua, and younger brother of Admiral Bartholomew Samuel Rowley.

² He had married Mr. Scourfield's daughter.

FROM CAPTAIN G. MARTIN

My dear Markham,—I received your letter of the 5th July by the Morgiana brig on my way from Egypt to this place, and am very happy to hear you are well.

The Northumberland is in a bad state, or at least the copper on her bottom is so bad that from the best she is now one of the worst sailing ships on this station. I do not say this from any particular wish to go to England unless I could get on shore for some time. You know my opinion upon the subject of foreign service, and I assure you I still hold to the same.

I now wish to ask you to tell me fairly whether a man would be forgiven that quitted his ship, for if the war is to be eternal, I confess I am not prepared to sacrifice the society of everything and every person that makes life desirable; at the same time I should not like totally to sacrifice every claim that I perhaps flatter myself in thinking I have upon the service.

If, as I understand, the appointment of warrant officers is in your department, allow me to recommend to you Mr. Benjamin Orchard as one of the best carpenters in the king's service. He was with me in the Northumberland. Your friend Croft is still in the Foudroyant. I have spoken more than once to my Lord Keith about him, but without success. He has served his time and passed. Believe me ever

Most truly yours,
GEO. MARTIN.¹

Northumberland, Malta, October 11th, [1802].

¹ He became rear-admiral in 1805.

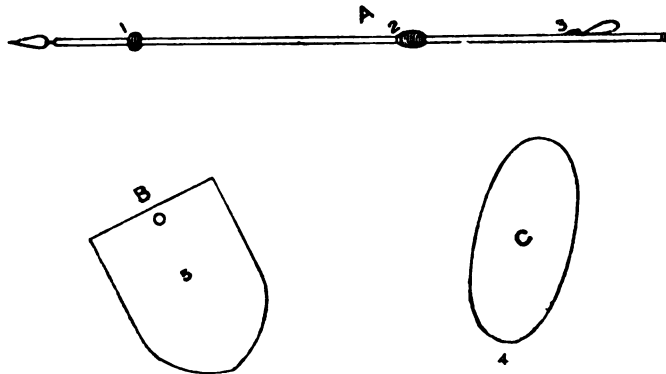
FROM CAPTAIN PHILIP BEAVER

Maldon, 20th August, 1803.

Dear Sir,—People, you know, not accustomed to have shot flying about them for hours together feel sometimes rather awkward when first going into battle, and this awkward sensation is sometimes felt in proportion not to the danger, but to the exposure of the person. A goose will put its head under its wing, and an ostrich hide its in a bush, and think that they cannot be seen; and many persons feel a confidence if there be only a sheet of brown paper between them and the enemy, which they would not have were that paper removed.

To inspire confidence in the Sea-Fencibles, and a well-grounded one, is my motive for now claiming two minutes of your attention. The Sea-Fencibles, armed only with pikes, many of whom have never seen an enemy, may, I am apprehensive if there was a necessity for charging the enemy's infantry, feel a little awkward in advancing against their musketry, totally unsheltered, and without having firearms to retaliate. Now I think that something like a shield, made of leather and carried near the end of the pike, would resist the enemy's shot at about sixty yards, after which, if we charge quick, they could not reload; that the shield should be of such a size as effectually to cover the vital parts of the body, and it would not only inspire our men with confidence, but be likely I think, from the novelty, to frighten the cavalry, and intimidate the

infantry of the enemy. To be useful the shield should be light, easily carried, and capable of turning a musket ball at sixty yards. I have not yet made any experiments by firing at leather, something like scupper-leather, hung up at that distance, but I have shown the form and manner of using the proposed shield to Sir James Craig, who thinks that its adoption would be highly useful if at sixty yards it would repel a musket ball.



A, THE PIKE. B, THE SHIELD.
C, THE STRAP TO GO OVER THE SHOULDER.

1. The Turk's head, which prevents the shield sliding downwards when placed on the pike by means of the hole 5.
2. The mouse for the left, and
3. The becket for the right hand.
4. The toggle inserted in the hole 5, when the shield is not carried on the pike.

N.B.—The Turk's head is about two feet from the end of the pike. The shield is about twenty inches broad and thirty-two inches deep.

The front rank should only carry the shield.

The expense of each shield will be about 10s. 6d.

On the upper part of the pike, about two feet from its point, is a Turk's head to prevent the shield sliding lower down ; a mouse for the left and a becket

for the right hand, as on board a ship, are also worked on the pike ; and when the shield is not wanted for protection, a strap over the shoulder with a toggle will carry it easily by the side. I have endeavoured to send you a sketch of the thing proposed, which, if you think it at all likely to be adopted, I would propose to the admiralty, but until I hear your opinion I shall say nothing more on the subject.

I am, sir, your very humble servant,

P. BEAVER.

FROM CAPTAIN WILLIAM CROFT¹

Stillington, October 19th, 1804.

My dear Sir,—I very much surprised my family last night by my appearance, when they had just received a letter from me mentioning that the admiral had made me an offer of returning which I refused, supposing if I could but remain, with a little assistance to be able to get a post in a country where men of family and interest seldom remain. But very shortly after this I was sent with orders to Captain Herbert, of the *Uranie*, who was convoying the fleet home, and during my stay with him I was attacked with the yellow fever. Although he took me as far to the northward as Bermuda, I was in so deplorable a state that the surgeon requested the opinion of the surgeon of the fleet on me, and they said the only chance of my recovering would be to return to England, so he was so kind as to bring me home. I feel myself extremely happy in being a commander, and was very much afraid you would have left the admiralty before I was appointed or my commission got home. Believe me, I feel most sincerely indebted to you for my last promotion, as well as upon all former occasions. I am sorry to say that the admiral felt hurt at not receiving a line from you on my being made a commander at home, and it had nearly been of the greatest con-

¹ See foot-note at p. 91.

sequence to me, for he said you had not appointed me to any ship, so I must give up the *Vigilant* and return home the next day by the convoy. I represented to him how inconvenient it would be to leave her at such short notice, as well as expensive. As there were many vacancies at that time he at last consented to my remaining. Little did I expect to be obliged to leave her at much less notice. Be so good as to present my best compliments to Mrs. Markham, and I remain, my dear sir,

Your most obliged, humble servant,
W. CROFT.

H.M. brig *Alacrity*, February 20th, 1807, Chatham.

My dear Admiral,—I was much disappointed at not seeing you when in London. I have been here five days, which might as well have been spent in London, for nothing has been done to the brig during that time. Upon application to Admiral Rowley for marines, he told me he could not have any until a purser was appointed, which was rather doing me a service than otherwise, provided the admiralty do not think me long in fitting. Having received all the preferment I have got from you, it has been my determination till now never to express a wish to you for more, but learning from all quarters that you have the most influence, if not the sole management, at the board, I cannot withstand the temptation of entreating you will send me to the Mediterranean or some other foreign station where I shall have a chance of promotion, as I fear me and my family are likely to come on the parish. Knowing you have no time to read long letters, with best compliments to Mrs. Markham, believe me, my dear admiral, &c.

Hulbert's Hotel, Chatham, Sunday noon.

My dear Admiral,—In your last you desired I would acquaint you when ready for sea. I have now that pleasure, if you will order a party of men from the Princess Royal now lying idle, stripped, on board. I am ready to go to any part of the world. The papers mention a change. If you should go out—if you can lend me a helping hand no one will feel more obliged, as no one stands in more need of it than, &c.

P.S.—I have a promise from Lord Fitzwilliam of his assistance, and have written him on the subject by this post.

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- Nelson, Lord, 68, 211, 357-8, 385
- Nepean, Sir Evan, 4, 8, 10, 13, 21, 23, 29, 31, 136. Born in 1751 ; purser of Foudroyant with Sir John Jervis ; he succeeded Sir Philip Stephens as secretary of the admiralty in 1795 ; baronet

- in 1802 ; a lord of the admiralty, 1804-6 ; governor of Bombay, 1812-19 ; died in 1822
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- Popham, Admiral Sir Home, 56, 210, 242-3, 246-7, 249 50, 258-9, 265, 270, 275, 290, 296. Born 1762 ; captain in 1795 ; F.R.S. 1799 ; in 1803 his code of signals was adopted for the navy ; captain of the fleet with Lord Gambier in 1807 ; commander-in-chief at Jamaica, 1817 ; died in 1820 ; an excellent observer and surveyor
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 Smith, Admiral Sir W. Sidney, 68, 71, 73, 98, 100, 107, 113, 115-16, 122, 126, 138-45, 147-8, 157, 170, 173, 182, 312, 353. Born 1764; captain, 1783; in 1789-90 served with the Swedes in the Gulf of Finland; Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Sword, 1792; defended Acre against Bonaparte in 1799; served under Lord Keith on the coast of Flanders, 1803-14; died in 1840
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- 1728; clerk in the navy office and senior clerk at the admiralty from 1751 to 1757; under-secretary, 1759-63; secretary, 1763-95; baronet, 1795; civil lord, 1795-1806; granted a pension, 1,500*l.* a year; died in 1809
- Stewart, Captain, 70, 103, 113, 117-19, 139, 144, 149-50, 157, 168, 173
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- Thornbrough, Admiral Sir Edward, 28, 36, 49-50, 52, 58, 64, 95, 104-5, 111, 115, 123, 127, 146, 151, 153, 157-8, 164, 185, 255, 353. Born in 1750; rear-admiral in the North Sea under Lord Keith 1803-5; in the Mediterranean with Lord Collingwood 1806-9; constantly employed until 1818; died in 1834
- Tierney, Mr. George, 18, 19. M.P. for Southwark in 1796; a persistent opponent of Pitt, with whom, in 1798, he fought a duel; treasurer of the navy 1802; president of the board of control 1806; master of the Mint 1827; died in 1830
- Tilly, Lieut. Charles, 368-9
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- Tucker, Mr. Benjamin, 6, 8, 11, 12, 16, 17, 20-1, 24, 27, 31, 35, 51, 56, 59, 61-2, 67, 154, 174, 210, 284, 334. Secretary to Lord St. Vincent from 1798, and continued with him at the admiralty; second secretary to the admiralty January-May 1804, and again February 1806-April 1807; died 1820
- Tucker, Mr. Joseph, 62, 334, 355, 372, 409. Brother of Benjamin Tucker; master builder at Plymouth; surveyor of the navy with Sir Robert Seppings in 1813; superannuated in 1831
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 Wright, John Wesley, commander, 31, 119-23, 127, 132-4, 137-8, 140, 142, 154, 157-8, 162, 170, 173, 318. An excellent linguist, but of very little naval experience, he was put in command of the *Vincejo* rather as a political agent, and made himself nearly as obnoxious to his commanding officers as to the French Government. On May 8, 1804, the brig was driven by stress of weather into Quiberon Bay, was surrounded by French gunboats and forced to surrender. After being kept a close prisoner in the *Temple* for eighteen months, Wright was found dead on the morning of October 27, 1805. Whether he had been murdered, had committed suicide, or had died from natural causes, has never been determined
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